



GREAT BALLARD

Safeguarding Children & Child Protection Policy

Policy Information	
Date of last review	Spring 2026
Date of next review	Autumn 2026
Review Cycle	Annually
Policy Manager	Pastoral Deputy & DSL

KEY CONTACTS

The Welfare Team

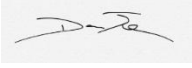


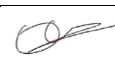
Daniel Joseph	Pastoral deputy head	DSL	d.joseph@greatballard.co.uk	01243 814236
Alice Hardwick	Senior Deputy and DDSL	Deputy DSL	a.hardwick@greatballard.co.uk	01243 814236
Matt King	Headteacher	Deputy DSL	m.king@greatballard.co.uk	01243 814236
Tom Anderson	Head of prep school	Deputy DSL	t.anderson@greatballard.co.uk	01243 814236
Sally Brooks	SENCO (Designated Teacher for Looked After Children)	DSL	s.brooks@greatballard.co.uk	01243 814236
Madeliene Willis	Mental Health Lead	DSL	m.willis@greatballard.co.uk	01243 814236
Katie Morgan Yvonne Barr	Head of pre-prep	Deputy DSL EYFS DSL	k.morgan@greatballard.co.uk y.barr@greatballard.co.uk	01243 814236

Governance for safeguarding

Mrs Susan Jay	<i>Proprietor</i>	S.jay@greatballard.co.uk	01243 814236
Mr Vernon Hales	<i>For and on behalf of the board</i>	v.hales@greatballard.co.uk	01243 814236

Monitoring and Review

This policy is subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Headmaster, SLT and Welfare Team. The Proprietor will undertake an annual audit of safeguarding reviewing this policy and the procedures that stem from it. This audit will usually take place at the end of the summer term.

Name	Role	Review date	Date of next review	Signed
Mr Dan Joseph	DSL	October 2025	Autumn 2026	
Mr Matt King	Headteacher	October 2025	Autumn 2026	
Mrs Susan Jay	Proprietor	October 2025	Autumn 2026	
Mr Vernon Hales	Non-Executive Director Board Member for Safeguarding	October 2025	Autumn 2026	

KEY EXTERNAL CONTACTS

Local Authority Designated Officer	Donna Tomlinson - LADO Miriam Williams - LADO Tel: 0330 222 6450 (9am - 5.00pm) lado@westsussex.gov.uk
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Local Authority Children's Social Services	Tel: 01403 229 900 (Out of Hours - 0330 222 6664) www.westsussexscp.org.uk
West Sussex Children's Services Integrated Front Door	Tel: 01403 229 900 Email WSChildrenservices@westsussex.gov.uk Tel: 07711 769657, for the duty Social Worker, in an emergency if none of the above numbers work. You can also use the Online Referral Form to make a Child Protection Referral to the Front Door for Families.
Support and Advice about Extremism	Chichester Police TEL: 01273 470101 EMERGENCY: 999 NON EMERGENCY NUMBER: 101 https://www.sussex.police.uk/contact/af/contact-us/ WSCC Prevent Tel: 03302 224223 or 07894589071 EMAIL: Beverley.Knight@westsussex.gov.uk PREVENT LEAD: Beverley Knight https://www.sussex.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/t/prevent/prevent/ UK Anti-Terrorism Hotline: 0800 789 321 www.gov.uk/report-terrorism Department for Education NON EMERGENCY NUMBER: 020 7340 7264 EMAIL: counter.extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance
NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line	ADDRESS: Weston House, 42 Curtain Road, London, EC2A 3NH TEL: 0800 028 0285 EMAIL: help@nspcc.org.uk
Disclosure and Barring Service	ADDRESS: DBS customer services, PO Box 3961, Royal Wootton Bassett, SN4 4HF TEL: 03000 200 190 EMAIL: customerservices@dbb.gov.uk
Teaching Regulation Agency	ADDRESS: Teacher Misconduct, Ground Floor South, Cheylesmore House, 5 Quinton Road, Coventry, CV1 2WT TEL: 0207 593 5393 EMAIL: misconduct.teacher@education.gov.uk
OFSTED Safeguarding Children	TEL: 0300 123 4666 (Monday to Friday from 8am to 6pm) EMAIL: Whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk
Independent Schools Inspectorate	ADDRESS: CAP House, 9-12 Long Lane, London, EC1A 9HA EMAIL: concerns@isi.net TEL: 0207 6000100

Great Ballard School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

1. Introduction and Aims

At Great Ballard School, the physical and mental health, safety and welfare of the children in our care is at the heart of everything we do, and we have an absolute commitment to maintaining our culture of open and effective communication between staff and pupils and our excellent pastoral structures.

The Great Ballard School Safeguarding Policy is written in accordance with:

- West Sussex Safeguarding Partnership's procedures and practice as part of the inter-agency safeguarding procedures set up by the Local Safeguarding Children Executive: the health partnership, police and local authorities.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2025) ("KCSIE")
 - Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 (August 2018)
 - What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners (March 2015)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (March 2026) ("WT")
 - Information sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services (July 2018)
- Revised Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales (March 2023)
 - The Prevent Duty: Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers (June 2015)
 - The use of social media for on-line radicalisation (July 2015)
- Early Years Foundation stage statutory framework (Sept 2025)

This policy also takes into account the procedures and practice of West Sussex County Council as part of the inter-agency safeguarding procedures set up by the West Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership.

This policy is also applicable to the whole school community including the Early Years Foundation Stage, out of school care and all other activities provided by the school. The Board of Directors takes seriously its responsibility under sections 157 and 175 of the Education Act 2002 to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; and to work together with other agencies to ensure adequate arrangements within the school to identify, assess, and support those children who are at risk of harm.

Great Ballard School works closely with the three safeguarding partners (West Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership, NHS Clinical Commissioning Group & the police) to ensure that the welfare and safety of pupils at the school is given appropriate priority (guided by local protocols and arrangements). The DSL and DDSs will be the primary point of contacts between the School and our Safeguarding Partners at these times.

At the School, we recognise that all adults, including temporary/supply staff, volunteers and Directors, have a full and active part to play in protecting our pupils from harm, and that the child's welfare is our paramount concern. Wherever the word "staff" is used, it covers ALL staff, including support, supply and self-employed staff, contractors, volunteers working with children etc. All staff believe that our school should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment that promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual child.

All members of staff have a duty to safeguard our pupils' welfare and must therefore familiarise themselves and comply at all times with this policy. This includes a duty both to children in need and to children at risk of harm. All staff should read Part 1 of KCSIE and Annex B, whenever a new version is published and demonstrate an understanding of what they have read. All staff should be aware that safeguarding incidents can happen at any time and anywhere and are required to be alert to any possible concerns.

Children may suffer neglect, emotional, physical or sexual abuse or a combination of such types of abuse. All children have a right to be protected from abuse. Whilst the school will work openly with parents as far as possible, the school reserves the right to contact Children's Social Care or the Police, without notifying parents if this is in the child's best interests. Our children have the right to respect and protection from abuse, regardless of age, gender identity, religion, race, nationality, sexuality, culture or disability.

1.1 School Website Safeguarding Statement

The parents of children at Great Ballard School should be aware that the school has a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are their pupils. This responsibility necessitates a safeguarding policy. The purpose of this policy is to provide staff, volunteers, board of directors and the proprietor with the guidance they need in order to keep children safe and secure in school and to inform parents, guardians and carers how pupils will be safeguarded whilst they are in the school's care.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is now defined as:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- Protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online (this last part has been added)
- Preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- Making sure that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

2. Roles and Responsibilities of school staff

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children has an important role to play. Great Ballard school staff are particularly important as they are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children, promote children's welfare and prevent concerns from escalating. It is important all staff (including those who do not work directly with children) recognise the important role they play in protecting children.

The DSL has overall responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place).

The DSL who leads the Welfare Team, including DDSLs who are trained to the same standard as the DSL. The DSL has a job description for their safeguarding role and key activities in appendix 1. In the absence of a DSL, the DDSLs will carry out the DSL functions necessary to ensure the on-going safety and protection of pupils.

All staff, but especially the DSL, will consider the context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur. This is known as contextual safeguarding, which means assessments of children should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare.

2.1 The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead

(Please Refer to Appendix 1- Designated Safeguarding Lead – Full Job Specification)

The Proprietor ensures that DSL and DDSLs have the appropriate status, authority, time, funding, training, supervision, resources and support to fulfil their child welfare and safeguarding responsibilities effectively, and to provide direction and advice to staff on child protection matters.

The Key responsibilities of the DSLs and DDSLs are:

- Understanding the assessment process for providing early help and intervention, for example through locally agreed assessment processes
- Having a working knowledge of how Local Authorities (WSSFS, IFD) conduct child protection case conferences and case review conferences, and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively.

- Ensuring all members of staff have access to and understand the school's child protection policy and procedures, as well as dealing with child on child abuse, online safety and managing a report of child on child sexual violence or harassment.
- Being alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs (SEN) and young carers.
- Being able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals via MyConcern.
- Obtaining access to resources and attending any relevant or refresher training courses
- Encouraging a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures the school may put in place to protect them.
- Keeping the Head and Board of Directors informed of major issues and investigations as appropriate. This should include being aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult in support at these times.
- Ensuring that there is a clear staff recruitment and induction policy check list.
- Reporting to Board of Directors as appropriate (termly and as part of the annual audit) about any open safeguarding cases and any changes to safeguarding procedures or structures. Report to the Board of Directors a review of the filtering and monitoring standards and discuss with the IT department and service providers what more needs to be done to meeting the standards.
- Filtering and monitoring: Review, plan and implement the filtering and monitoring standards. Update safeguarding, child protection and link policies to reflect the filtering and monitoring standards.

The DSL is also the first point of contact for external agencies who are pursuing Child Protection investigations and co-ordinates the School's representation at Child Protection conferences and Core Group meetings (including the submission of written reports for case conferences).

2.2 The role of Safeguarding and other Directors

A designated Director responsible for safeguarding is appointed and their name and contact details are published at the front of this Policy. This Director is responsible for reviewing the school's safeguarding arrangements ensuring the existence of a written safeguarding policy and procedures that meet statutory requirements. This policy is made available to parents on the school's website.

As part of their annual review, the Board of Directors will monitor the procedures for, and the efficiency with which, the safeguarding duties have been discharged, ensuring that any deficiencies or weaknesses in safeguarding arrangements are remedied without delay and will approve amendments to safeguarding arrangements in the light of changing regulations or recommended best practice. The details of the annual audit, as reported to the Board of Directors, are minuted in sufficient detail to demonstrate the breadth and depth of the review.

The Director responsible for safeguarding will visit the school on a termly basis and will enquire of staff how they understand the policy and how and to who they would pass on their safeguarding concerns. They would also monitor that children are taught about safeguarding, including online safety, as part of a broad and balanced curriculum.

It is recognised that all Directors have a safeguarding responsibility. They receive a copy of KCSIE and are asked to confirm that they have read it and ensure understanding. Directors are encouraged to read all parts along with Annexes to ensure that they are fully versed in all areas. Directors also complete safeguarding training in line with the rest of the school staff.

2.3 The role of the Proprietor

It is incumbent on the Proprietor to comply with their duties under legislation and ensures the policies, procedures and training in the school are effective and comply with the law at all times. The Proprietor ensures that senior members of staff receive appropriate time, training and resourcing to act as DSL and DDSLs for the whole school (including EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage)).

The Proprietor and the board of directors formally adopts this policy and reviews its contents annually or sooner if any legislative or regulatory changes are notified to Great Ballard School.

They will request, as part of the statutory review, an Annual Report on Safeguarding Children, specifically drawn up to monitor compliance with the requirements of Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment. The review covers all aspects of child protection and safeguarding referrals (including numbers, but not specifics) made by the school during the past year, patterns of incidents, training undertaken by staff and any changes made to procedures during the year. Great Ballard School ensures that any deficiencies or weaknesses in child protection arrangements are remedied immediately, once identified. The Proprietor is accountable for ensuring Great Ballard School has effective child protection policies and procedures in place that are in accordance with guidance issued by the Secretary of State and the West Sussex LEA.

2.4 The role of all staff

Staff recognise that safeguarding is the responsibility of all who work, volunteer or learn in our school. Through day-to-day contact with children, our staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. They are required to report instances of actual or suspected child abuse or neglect to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (Deputy DSL). Great Ballard School recognises it is an agent of referral and not of investigation. Staff know that any person may make a referral to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) via the West Sussex Integrated Front Door, and the police if necessary and without parental consent using the contacts in this policy.

West Sussex SCP requests that parents, guardians and carers understand the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection, by setting out its obligations on the school website and offering parents, guardians and carers a written copy of this policy on request. We notify parents, guardians and carers of concerns and when appropriate provide them with opportunities to change the situation, where this does not place the child at greater risk. We also notify the allocated case worker if there are repeated unexplained absences for a pupil with a Child Protection Plan. We co-operate, as required, with the West Sussex SCP regarding child protection matters including attendance at Child Protection Case Conferences. Our school liaises with other agencies that support pupils such as Police and the Educational Psychology Service through normal referral routes.

We require that:

- All staff, volunteers and Board of Directors should know the name of the DSL designated senior Lead and Deputy DSL and the person responsible for child protection and understand their responsibilities to safeguard and protect children.
- Staff must be aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in criminal or disciplinary action being taken against them.
- Staff and volunteers explicitly and immediately report (using guidance in this policy) any concern or allegation about school practices or the behaviour of staff and volunteers which are likely to put pupils at risk of abuse or other serious harm.
- At all levels, including newly appointed and ancillary, staff have been given briefing or training on responding to suspicions or allegations of abuse, including child on child, and know what action they should take in response to such suspicions or allegations.
- All staff are aware of the systems at Great Ballard school which support safeguarding, including proactive approaches, monitoring and recording (MyConcern), thresholds, the welfare team, amongst

others. This information is shared at training throughout the year and included for all staff as part of new staff induction.

- All staff are familiar with this policy and have been given a copy of Part 1 and Annex B of the most up to date version of Keeping Children Safe in Education and are asked to confirm that they have read both ensuring understanding. Staff are made aware of any significant changes made to this policy or KCSIE at the start of and during the year.
- All staff are aware of the indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation, understanding that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the school, inside and outside of home, and online.

2.5 Contextual safeguarding

- Safeguarding incidents and / or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the School and / or can occur between children outside the School.
- All staff, should consider the context within which such incidents and /or behaviours occur, for example where wider environmental factors are present in a child's life (including the risk of intra-familial harm, as well as those outside the home) that may be a threat to their safety and / or welfare.
- The school will work with local partners, including Social Care and Police, to ensure that there is a continuing alertness to any emerging contextual risks, and to ensure that assessment of risk for any pupils includes appropriate reference to their local community and environment.

3. Procedures for Staff to deal with concerns or suspicions of abuse or neglect

3.1 Where a child/young person makes a disclosure of abuse or neglect

We will:

- Always take the child seriously
- Listen carefully and record their concerns
- Tell the child they have done the right thing by telling us
- Clarify if necessary
- Make an accurate record on MyConcern as soon as possible using the words spoken by the child.
- Inform the DSL without delay.
- Utilise training such as MHFA ALGEE framework
- Exercise professional curiosity, always with a mindset of **'it could happen here'**

We will not:

- Promise confidentiality.
- Investigate.
- Ask leading questions and repeatedly question/ask the child to repeat the disclosure over and over.

3.2 Reporting Concerns

If any member of the Great Ballard School Community has a concern about a pupil, they are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately and without delay. They can do this in two ways:

- (1) Contacting a member of the **welfare team**
- (2) Contacting the DSL or Deputy DSL directly

The Welfare Committee	Role	Contact
Dan Joseph	DSL	d.joseph@greatballard.co.uk 07702538277

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Alice Hardwick	DDSL and Senior deputy	a.hardwick@greatballard.co.uk 01243814236
Sally Brooks	SENCO	s.brooks@greatballard.co.uk 01243814236
Tom Anderson	Head of Prep school (Y3-6)	t.anderson@greatballard.co.uk 01243814236
Madeliene Willis	Mental Health Lead	M.willis@greatballard.co.uk 01243814236
Matt King	Headteacher	m.king@greatballard.co.uk 01243814236
Katie Morgan Yvonne Barr	Head of Pre-Prep (N-Y2), DSL for EYFS	y.barr@greatballard.co.uk k.morgan@greatballard.co.uk 01243814236

The welfare team meet weekly but can be contacted at any time. While the school site is closed, they will be contactable at home or on their mobile telephone. All usual safeguarding and child protection procedures can be coordinated online and off-site. Staff should also continue to make contact with the DSL and welfare team in order to talk through any concerns / worries they might have.

If you have an immediate concern, you can also contact:

- Social Care Support directly: Via Integrated Front Door (IFD): **Phone:** 01403 229900 (Mon to Fri between 9.00am and 5.00pm) or [Online](#)
- In an emergency, telephone 999
- Child Exploitation and Online Protection Agency: www.ceop.police.uk

3.3 Reporting and Recording Concerns Procedure - MyConcern

- All concerns, discussions, and decisions (together with reasons) made under these procedures should be recorded in writing (on **MyConcern** as key record). This will help if/when responding to any complaint about the way a case has been handled.
- The record should include a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern, details of how the concern was followed up and resolved and a note of any action taken, the decision reached and the outcome.
- The information should be kept confidential and stored securely, ensuring that the file is only accessible to those who need to see it, and is shared in accordance with the guidance set out in Parts one and two of KCSIE.
- Key language is encouraged to use on these records to ensure that external agencies are able to utilise the information recorded to the best of their ability.

All staff have access to MyConcern. Screenshot of the concerns wizard.

Report a Concern

Name(s) of Pupil(s)

Please enter at least 3 characters to search

Please add the Pupil(s) who are the subject of this concern and add any other Pupil(s) you want associated to it.

Concern Summary

e.g. Injury - Megan arrived at School this morning with a badly bruised right eye.

Send Concern to

Please Select a Notification Group

Concern Date/Time

DD/MM/YYYY HH:MM

Details of Concern

There is no need to repeat the Concern Summary.

Working together to Safeguard children (2026)

This major school policy has recently been updated (March 2026) and below are a summary of the changes that schools and us as Great Ballard are doing to reflect these changes

Safeguarding is the responsibility of all staff within the school community. In line with *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026*, we recognise that safeguarding applies to all children, including those who are looked after, in kinship care, adopted, or where concerns arise during pregnancy. We are committed to creating an inclusive, anti-discriminatory safeguarding culture, where all staff actively challenge racism, bias and inequality and understand how these can impact children's experiences and outcomes.

What we do in practice:

- All staff receive training on recognising and challenging discrimination and bias in safeguarding
- Safeguarding concerns always consider context (culture, identity, vulnerability, lived experience)
- Staff are expected to professionally challenge poor practice or decisions

Key changes in 2026 document that are reflected in Safeguarding practice at Great Ballard

Stronger Focus on Types of Harm (Including Hidden Harm)

The school recognises the increased emphasis on identifying and responding to complex and often hidden forms of harm, including child sexual abuse, coercive control, domestic abuse, and harmful behaviours within peer relationships. We acknowledge that children may experience multiple and overlapping harms, including those linked to online environments and real-world experiences.

What we do:

- Staff are trained to identify subtle signs of abuse (not just disclosure)
- Safeguarding systems capture patterns, not just isolated incidents
- Online safety concerns are treated as safeguarding, not behaviour alone
- Peer-on-peer abuse is addressed as a child protection issue

Early Help & “Family Help” Approach

In line with the 2026 guidance, the school adopts a proactive early help approach, recognising the importance of timely support through a more integrated “Family Help” model, which brings together early help and statutory support into a coordinated offer. We prioritise early identification of need and work collaboratively with families and external agencies to prevent escalation of concerns.

What we do:

- Use clear internal systems to identify emerging concerns early
- Initiate or contribute to Early Help / Family Help plans
- Maintain consistent relationships with pupils and families
- Share concerns promptly with DSL to avoid delay

Multi-Agency Working & Information Sharing

The school is fully committed to effective multi-agency safeguarding arrangements (MASA) and recognises its statutory role within local safeguarding partnerships. We will share information appropriately, promptly, and lawfully to safeguard children, contributing to a clear understanding of risk, including issues of disproportionality and inequality.

What we do:

- Engage actively with local safeguarding partners
- Share relevant information without delay when safeguarding risk is identified
- Contribute to multi-agency assessments, meetings, and plans
- Record and monitor safeguarding concerns to support evidence-based decision-making

Inclusion, Equality and Anti-Discriminatory Practice

The school recognises that safeguarding practice must actively address racism, discrimination and disproportionality. We are committed to ensuring that all safeguarding decisions are equitable, inclusive, and responsive to individual needs, recognising that some groups of children may face additional barriers to protection.

What we do:

- Regularly review safeguarding data for patterns or disproportionality
- Ensure pupil voice is heard, particularly from vulnerable or underrepresented groups
- Adapt safeguarding responses to meet individual needs

Safeguarding Babies, Unborn Children & Transition Points

The school acknowledges the strengthened expectation to consider safeguarding concerns at the earliest stage, including for unborn children and during key transition points. We will work with relevant professionals to ensure timely intervention where risk is identified.

What we do:

- Share concerns about families where there may be risk to younger siblings/unborn children
- Support transition safeguarding (primary → secondary, etc.)
- Liaise with external agencies where family-wide risk is identified

Learning from Safeguarding Incidents

The school is committed to continuous improvement through learning from safeguarding incidents, reviews and local/national findings. We will reflect on practice, implement changes, and ensure that safeguarding systems remain effective and responsive.

What we do:

- Regular safeguarding reviews and case reflection
- Staff briefings following local or national safeguarding updates
- Policy updates in response to emerging risks

Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) has overall responsibility for safeguarding and child protection within the school. In line with 2026 guidance, the DSL ensures effective multi-agency working, timely information sharing, and oversight of safeguarding systems, including identifying patterns, vulnerability and risk.

DSL responsibilities include:

- Acting as the main point of contact for safeguarding concerns
- Ensuring timely referrals to external agencies
- Leading multi-agency collaboration and communication
- Monitoring safeguarding data for themes, trends and disproportionality
- Ensuring all staff receive regular, up-to-date safeguarding training
- Maintaining accurate, secure and chronological safeguarding records

Role of the Welfare / Safeguarding Team

The school's safeguarding/welfare team supports the DSL in delivering a coordinated, early intervention approach, ensuring that pupils receive timely and appropriate support.

Responsibilities include:

- Supporting early identification of need
- Delivering or coordinating pastoral and emotional support
- Contributing to Family Help / Early Help plans
- Acting as a trusted adult for pupils
- Escalating concerns promptly to the DSL

Responsibilities of All Staff

All staff have a statutory responsibility to safeguard children. Staff must be vigilant, recognise indicators of abuse, and act immediately on any concerns, ensuring that safeguarding is prioritised at all times.

All staff will:

- Report concerns immediately to the DSL
- Maintain a "it could happen here" mindset
- Record concerns clearly and factually
- Understand that safeguarding includes online, peer and contextual harm

- Challenge poor practice and never assume someone else will act

The school recognises that safeguarding is dynamic and evolving, and will ensure that policies, training and practice remain aligned with national guidance and local safeguarding priorities.

Early Help

The sooner a family receives the right support, the sooner they are able to improve their situation and prevent the need for prolonged support. Early help sets out to provide help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge. At Great Ballard we implement an internal system of early help when students

Students and families meeting a higher threshold are referred to the IFD and will receive the next level of Early help support. A ‘whole family’ approach ensures that children’s needs and welfare are being met and maintained as well as those of the family. This is done by working with the family, local communities and others already supporting them. Further information can be found in the link below:

<https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/social-care-and-health-information-for-professionals/children/early-help/early-help-services/>

All staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for an **early help** assessment for a child who:

- Has a disability and has specific additional needs
- Has poor mental health
- Has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education, health and care plan)
- Is a young carer.
- Is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups.
- Is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home.
- Is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves.
- Is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation.
- Is at risk of being radicalised or exploited.
- Is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health problems or domestic abuse; is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves.
- Is experiencing or is at risk of experiencing family ostracism.
- Has returned home to their family from care; is a privately fostered child.
- Is the subject of a Child Protection Plans and any incidents or concerns involving these children will be reported immediately to the allocated Social Worker (and confirmed in writing).
- Is (themselves or their families) going through the court system
- Joins the school mid-year.
- Who have previously been excluded from school.
- May be homeless
- Has a family member in prison.

The DSL will take the lead on **early help** assessments, liaising with appropriate external agencies as appropriate.

Where concerns are raised about a “Child in Need” (CIN)

- A “Child in Need” refers to a pupil whose circumstances may require them to have extra support in order to live a life which does not compromise their ability to fulfil their potential. The School will refer to external agencies such as CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service) or West Sussex Children’s partnership.

Great Ballard School recognises that there may also be children who, whilst not suffering harm or at immediate risk, require additional support from external agencies. Where appropriate, the DSL may consult with the child concerned and the parents regarding a referral to external agencies (such as the IFD). This may lead to a plan to support a child in need being drawn up or an early help assessment. In either case, the School will liaise and take advice from external agencies as appropriate and will provide as much information as possible as part of the referral process to help social care assessments to consider contexts outside the home and enable a contextual approach to harm.

Where concerns are raised about a “Child at risk”

- A “Child at Risk” is a pupil who is in immediate risk of significant harm and such cases will be referred to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) as a matter of urgency. We recognise that a child who is abused or witnesses violence may feel helpless and humiliated, may blame themselves, and find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self-worth. We recognise that the School may provide the only stability in the lives of children who have been abused or who are at risk of harm.

Where staff have concerns that a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm a referral should be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately. Anyone can make a referral. If anyone other than the DSL makes a referral, they should inform the DSL that a referral has been made as soon as possible. Staff must share information with children's social care and/or the police where there are any concerns that a child may be at risk of harm or neglect. If staff members are unsure about whether or not a referral should be made, they should speak to the DSL. The DSL will contact either the LADO or the West Sussex Children's Services' Integrated Front Door for advice or direction.

In relation to EYFS, the School will inform Ofsted as soon as is reasonably practicable, in any event within 14 days, of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working or looking after children at the premises (whether that allegation relates to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere) or any other abuse which is alleged to have taken place on the premises, and of the action taken in respect of these allegations.

The DSL will refer all allegations or suspicions of abuse or cases where there is reasonable cause to suspect a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm to the LADO as soon as they are able to. Borderline cases will be discussed with the LADO without identifying individuals in the first instance and following discussions the LADO will judge whether or not an allegation or concern meets the relevant threshold and decide what further steps should be taken. This could involve calling the police.

Where the outcome of a referral is not reported back to the referring member of staff or DSL and/or where a child's situation does not appear to be improving, the school will follow this up with the children's social care and push for reconsideration where appropriate. Any member of staff who has concerns that a child's situation does not appear to be improving should press for re-consideration.

School staff will not do anything that may jeopardise any external investigation. Once the matter has been referred, all further responsibility for gathering information and deciding what happens next will rest with social services and the police.

Important Contact details are as follows:

West Sussex Continuum of Need / Threshold Guidance

The West Sussex Continuum of Need has been produced as a tool to assist practitioners working with children and young people. It's used by all agencies and teams, including Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), and provides a common language and approach that will enable all practitioners to work together effectively and consistently. The Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership (WSSCP) recommends that all agencies, schools

and settings working with children and their families use this tool to inform their decision-making regarding levels of need and to support their conversations with other professionals.

- [West Sussex Continuum of Need – Threshold Guidance \(Updated Feb 2024\)](#)
- [West Sussex Continuum of Need – Level of Need Descriptors \(Updated Feb 2024\)](#)

Making a Child Protection referral to The Integrated Front Door

If for any reason a DSL is unavailable, and you have serious concerns about a child, you should inform West Sussex Children's Services' Integrated Front Door during office hours using the given number or email or by using the secure forms linked below.

Telephone: 01403 229900 or email from a secure email address.

Email: WSChildrenservices@westsussex.gov.uk

– [Request Support from IFD for a child](#)

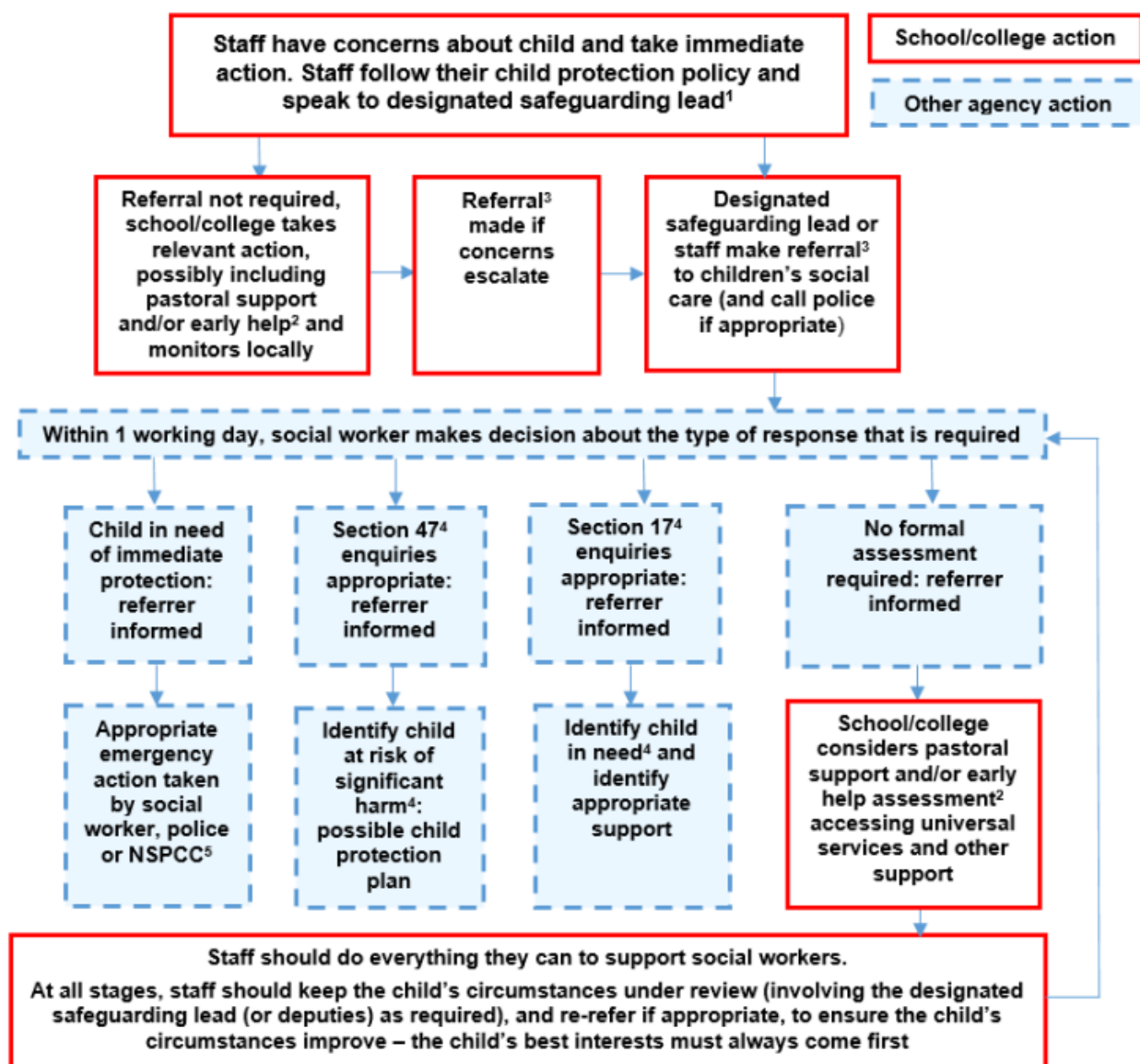
– [Request for support from IFD for an adult](#)

For emergencies only

If you require the Emergency Duty Team (EDT) outside of office hours (5.00pm-9.00am weekdays) or at weekends and bank holidays, please call 033 022 26664.

If the Emergency Duty Team line is unavailable and you need to report an emergency safeguarding concern, please call 07711 769657. This number does not accept texts.

Actions where there are concerns about a child



4. Supporting Pupils and teaching them how to keep safe

The School's curriculum and pastoral systems are designed to foster the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all our pupils. All teaching staff play a vital role in this process, helping to ensure that all pupils relate well to one another and feel safe and comfortable within the school. All staff are expected to lead by example and play a full part in promoting an awareness that is appropriate to their age amongst all our pupils on issues relating to health (physical and mental), safety and wellbeing.

Time is allocated in PSHE (Personal, Social, Health, Education) and tutor periods to discussions of what constitutes appropriate behaviour and on why bullying and lack of respect for others is never right. Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) as outlined in the DfE's document https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/62cea352e90e071e789ea9bf/Relationships_Education_RS_E_and_Health_Education.pdf is a statutory part of PHSE. Great Ballard ensures that RSE is part of the School's PSHE programme enabling greater awareness and that pupils are well equipped to deal with issues.

PSHE aims to be preventative rather than reactive. Preventative education is most effective in the context of a whole-school or college approach that prepares pupils and students for life in modern Britain and creates a culture of zero tolerance (e.g., towards sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobic and sexual violence/harassment).

These will be underpinned by the school/college's behaviour policy and pastoral support system, as well as by a planned programme of evidence based RSE (Relationships, Sex Education) delivered in regularly timetabled lessons and reinforced throughout the whole curriculum. Assemblies and lessons are used to promote tolerance and mutual respect and understanding. In delivering these subjects, we as a school must refer to the statutory guidance, which can be found [here](#) (revised for introduction September 2026).

Great Ballard School supports all pupils by:

- Providing access to a telephone enabling them to call for support in private.
- Providing every child with information on where to turn for advice, including confidential helplines and web addresses for external specialists such as ChildLine, Kidscape, Get Connected and the Samaritans.
- Displaying advice around school on where pupils can seek help.
- Providing mentoring training to senior pupils that specifically covers child protection issues and the importance of offering support and assistance to younger and to vulnerable pupils.
- Providing regular lessons to pupils on safeguarding, including online safety, whilst ensuring that all pupils understand and adhere to the school's guidelines in this area. These lessons include guidance on educating pupils how to stay safe, including online safety and online protection. More details on cyber-bullying are found in the school's anti-bullying policy.
- Encouraging self-esteem and self-assertiveness, through the curriculum as well as our relationships, whilst rejecting aggression or bullying.
- Promoting a caring, safe and positive environment within the school.
- Liaising and working together with all support services and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of children.
- Notifying external agencies as soon as there is a significant concern.
- Providing continuing support to a pupil about whom there have been concerns who then leaves the school by ensuring that appropriate information is copied under confidential cover to the pupil's new school in a timely fashion. The DSL/DDSL can share personal information without consent if it is not possible to gain consent, if it cannot be reasonably expected that the DSL/DDSL will gain consent, or if to gain consent would place a child at risk.

Recent Government updates on PSHE and RSE

With new incoming policy and curriculum in September 2026. Great Ballard is in the process of review, parent consultation and changes to ensure all education of PSHE is in line with government guidance. The recent supreme court ruling following the Cass review, identified that caution is necessary for children questioning their gender as there remain many unknowns about the impact of social transition and children may well have wider vulnerabilities, including having complex mental health and psychosocial needs, and in some cases additional diagnoses of autism and/or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.

As such, when supporting a gender questioning child, Great Ballard will take a cautious approach and consider the broad range of their individual needs, in partnership with the child's parents (other than in the exceptionally rare circumstances where involving parents would constitute a significant risk of harm to the child), including any clinical advice that is available and how to address wider vulnerabilities such as the risk of bullying.

Key guidance and information include;

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education>

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6970e7e67e827090d02d42e0/Relationships_education_relationships_and_sex_education_RSE_and_health_education_for_intro_1_September_2026_.pdf

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/including-guidance-on-children-who-are-questioning-their-gender-in-kcsie/including-guidance-on-children-who-are-questioning-their-gender-in-keeping-children-safe-in-education-kcsie>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-to-publish-new-gender-guidance-for-schools>

Looked after children

- The SLT ensures that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep safe any children on roll who are looked after by a local authority.
- The SENCO, is the designated member of staff who has responsibility for their welfare and progress. The School ensures that the designated member of staff receives appropriate training in order to carry out their role.

5. Supporting Staff and Staff responsibilities

Great Ballard School recognises that Staff who have become involved with supporting a child who has suffered harm, or appears to be likely to suffer harm, may find the situation stressful and upsetting. We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the DSL and to seek further support as appropriate.

The Head or DSL will disclose information about a pupil to other members of staff on a strict need-to-know basis. If staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately via the school's safeguarding processes and speak to the DSL, who will then take the lead on this case. All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children. Staff should know to not allow concerns over the sharing of information (with regard to the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations)) to stand in the way of the need to promote welfare and protect the safety of children.

It is important that the DSLs/DDSLs are honest and open in dealings with parents and thus parents will ideally be informed about any safeguarding concerns regarding their children. However, concerns of this nature must be referred to the DSL who will decide on the appropriate response. In a very few cases, it may not be right to inform parents of such concerns immediately as that action could prejudice any investigation or place the child at further risk.

All staff must be aware that as a result of their knowledge, position and/or the authority invested in their role, all adults working with children and young people in educational settings are in positions of trust in relation to the young people in their care. A relationship between a member of staff and a pupil cannot be a relationship between equals. There is potential for exploitation and harm to vulnerable young people and all members of staff have a responsibility to ensure that an unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification. Wherever possible, staff should avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others and must report and record any incident carrying this potential.

6. Staff Training

It is important that **all** staff have regular and frequent training to enable them to recognise the possible signs of abuse and neglect and to know what to do if they have a concern. Safeguarding is the responsibility of all members of staff and all staff should know what to do to raise a concern.

The depth and detail of training needed by different groups of staff will vary according to the nature of their role and the extent of their involvement with children. Staff are kept up to date with the changes in Safeguarding and are expected to complete any related training or read relevant documents to ensure compliance.

New staff (including temporary staff), volunteers, Directors and Advisers will receive training during their induction. Induction training will include:

- Familiarisation with this Safeguarding and Child Protection policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Pupil Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding response to children who are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions and/or prolonged periods.
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Low Level Concerns Policy
- The identity and role of the DSL and DDSLs
- ICT (Information and Communication Technology) Acceptable Use Policy for Staff
- Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education. (School leaders and board of directors should read the entire document while all those working directly with children should read Part 1 and Annex B. (Annex A may be deemed appropriate for staff not working closely with children or who struggle with literacy or language)

All staff will receive:

- Full formal safeguarding training no less than every three years and in accordance with the requirements of the West Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership (WSSCP).
- Updates (including KCSIE, Working together to Safeguard children and School Safeguarding Policy) at least annually and as necessary pending policy updates. These will usually be delivered at staff meetings, during INSET and via online training through Educare.
- Testing on KCSIE and other safeguarding priorities to ensure understanding (using Educare)
- Staff training will also include online safety and harmful sexual behaviours (including child on child sexual violence and harassment). It will also include Prevent awareness training to equip staff to raise concerns appropriately by ensuring all staff have the knowledge and confidence to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism; are able to challenge extremist ideas; and know how to refer children and young people for further help.

The DSL and DDSLs receive updated child protection training at least every two years to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. This includes local inter-agency working protocols, participation in child protection case conferences, supporting children in need, identifying children at risk of radicalisation, record keeping and promoting a culture of listening to children training in the Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership (WSSCP) approach to Prevent duties and harmful sexual behaviours. Further details of the required training content for the DSL are set out in Annex B of KCSIE and in the DSL job description in Appendix A of this document.

In addition to their formal training, the DSL's knowledge and skills are updated at least annually to keep up with any developments relevant to their role. The DDSLs are trained to the same level as the DSL.

Please consult **Appendix 5** for a copy of the current whole school safeguarding training model

7. What is child abuse?

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026) defines abuse as a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

Working Together to Safeguard Children (HM Government, 2026) and KCSIE further states that the types of abuse and neglect some of the following:

- *Abuse (Physical, emotional and sexual)*
- *Neglect*
- *Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)*
- *SEND*
- *County Lines*
- *Serious violence*
- *Child-on-child abuse*
- *Sexting (YPSI)*
- *Radicalisation*
- *Honour Based Abuse (HBA – Forced Marriage and FGM)*
- *Children absent from Education*
- *Modern slavery*
- *Domestic violence and abuse*
- *Online abuse (including cyber bullying and cybercrime)*

A child who has been, or may be experiencing abuse may show behavioural, emotional or physical signs of stress and abuse.

Some general indicators of child abuse include:

- Personality changes such as showing wariness, nervousness and distrust of adults; regressing to younger behaviour patterns such as rocking, sucking or biting excessively; bedwetting or soiling.
- Change in behaviour patterns - demanding, attention seeking, antisocial or aggressive behaviour; sleeping difficulties, often being tired and falling asleep; low self-esteem.
- Being isolated or withdrawn, lack of trust or fear of someone they know well, such as not wanting to be alone with a babysitter or child-minder; difficulty in forming relationships; confusing affectionate displays.
- Difficulty relating to adults and peers; abusing alcohol or drugs; being seemingly accident prone.
- Having broken bones or unexplained bruising, burns or welts in different stages of healing.
- Being unable to explain an injury, or providing explanations that are inconsistent, vague or unbelievable.
- Feeling suicidal or attempting suicide; unresponsiveness; having difficulty concentrating; sudden underachievement; being withdrawn or overly obedient; reluctance to change for, or participate in PE (Physical Education).
- Children's comments which give cause for concern; running away, stealing/lying; allegations made by a child concerning sexual abuse; 'frozen' look; apprehension; poor self-esteem; self-mutilation; extreme anger or sadness; depression, overdoses; anorexia.
- Being reluctant to go home; running away; creating stories, poems or artwork about abuse.

To ensure that our pupils are protected from harm, all staff need to understand what types of behaviour constitute abuse and neglect. The warning signs and symptoms of child abuse and neglect can vary from child to child. Children develop and mature at different rates so what appears to be worrying for a younger child might be normal behaviour for an older child. By understanding the warning signs, we can respond to problems as early

as possible and provide the right support and services for the child and their family. It is important to recognise that a warning sign does not automatically mean a child is being abused. There are four categories of abuse:

- Physical Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Neglect

Further information on specific forms of abuse can be found at www.nspcc.org.uk or from the www.gov.uk website but key areas are covered below.

7.1 Physical abuse

Physical abuse is deliberately physically hurting a child. It might take a variety of different forms, including hitting, pinching, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Physical abuse can happen in any family, but children may be more at risk if their parents have problems with drugs, alcohol and mental health or if they live in a home where domestic abuse happens. Children may also suffer domestic abuse in an intimate personal relationship. Support is signposted in Annex B of KCSIE.

Babies and disabled children also have a higher risk of suffering physical abuse. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child. Physical abuse can also occur outside of the family environment.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of physical abuse:

- Children with frequent injuries
- Children with unexplained or unusual fractures or broken bones
- Children with unexplained bruises or cuts, burns, scalds or bite marks.

7.2 Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child. It is also sometimes called psychological abuse and it can have severe and persistent adverse effects on a child's emotional development. Although the effects of emotional abuse might take a long time to be recognisable, practitioners will be in a position to observe it, for example, in the way that a parent interacts with their child. Emotional abuse may involve deliberately telling a child that they are worthless, or unloved and inadequate. It may include not giving a child opportunity to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. Emotional abuse may involve serious bullying – including online bullying through social networks, online games or mobile phones – by a child's peers.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of emotional abuse:

- Children who are excessively withdrawn, fearful, or anxious about doing something wrong
- Parents or carers who withdraw their attention from their child, giving the child the 'cold shoulder'
- Parents or carers blaming their problems on their child
- Parents or carers who humiliate their child, for example, by name-calling or making negative comparisons.

7.3 Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is any sexual activity with a child. A child may not understand what is happening and may not even understand that it is wrong. Sexual abuse can have a long-term impact on mental health.

Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males.

Women can commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. Sexual abuse can be a one-off event or can happen over a longer period of time.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of sexual abuse:

- Children who display knowledge or interest in sexual acts inappropriate to their age
- Children who use sexual language or have sexual knowledge that one wouldn't expect them to have
- Children who ask others to behave sexually or play sexual games
- Children with physical sexual health problems, including soreness in the genital and anal areas, sexually transmitted infections or underage pregnancy.

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology (DfE February 2017). A significant number of children who are victims of sexual exploitation go missing from home, care and education at some point.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of sexual exploitation

- Children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- Children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation
- Children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends
- Children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant
- Children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being
- Children who misuse drugs and alcohol
- Children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late
- Children who regularly miss school or education or don't take part in education.

7.4 Neglect

The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

However, while one may be concerned about a child, neglect is not always straightforward to identify. Neglect may occur if a parent becomes physically or mentally unable to care for a child. A parent may also have an addiction to alcohol or drugs, which could impair their ability to keep a child safe or result in them prioritising

buying drugs, or alcohol, over food, clothing or warmth for the child. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal drug or alcohol abuse.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of neglect:

- Children who are living in a home that is indisputably dirty or unsafe
- Children who are left hungry or dirty
- Children who are left without adequate clothing, e.g., not having a winter coat
- Children who are living in dangerous conditions, i.e., around drugs, alcohol or violence
- Children who are often angry, aggressive or self-harm
- Children who fail to receive basic health care
- Parents who fail to seek medical treatment when their children are ill or are injured.

7.5 Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources. In some cases, the abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage (such as increased status) of the perpetrator or facilitator. The abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults.

The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence. Victims can be exploited even when activity appears consensual, and it should be noted exploitation as well as being physical can be facilitated and/or take place online. More information include definitions and indicators are included in Annex B of KCSIE.

7.6 CSE and County Lines

Staff are made aware that children are at risk from, or may find themselves involved in, serious crime. The indicators for such involvement will be an increased absence from school, a change in friendship groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing. Advice for schools is provided in Annex B of KCSIE and in the Home Office's Preventing Youth Violence and Gang Involvement and its Criminal Exploitation of Children and Vulnerable adults: County Lines guidance. Further information on County Lines is included below.

7.7 SEN and Disability

All staff also need to be alert to the specific needs and vulnerabilities of those pupils who have special educational needs and/or medical conditions and disabilities, including young carers. Those with SEND may not outwardly show signs of abuse and/or may have difficulties in communication about abuse or neglect. Staff will support such pupils in expressing any concerns they may have and will be particularly vigilant to any signs or indicators of abuse, discussing this with the DSL as appropriate.

Disabled children have exactly the same human rights as non-disabled children. They can experience greater risks, vulnerability and unequal access to services and resources. They may have additional needs relating to physical, sensory, cognitive and/or communication impairments. Our staff receive relevant training to raise awareness and have access to specialist staff in the event they have concerns regarding abuse of a child. Some disabled children may be more vulnerable to abuse because they may.

- Have fewer outside contacts than other children
- Receive intimate, personal care
- Have an impaired capacity to resist or avoid abuse
- Have communication difficulties
- Fear losing services
- Be more vulnerable to peer abuse (e.g., bullying, sexual assault, intimidation)

7.8 County lines

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs (primarily crack cocaine and heroin) into one or more importing areas [within the UK], using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line”.

Exploitation is an integral part of the county lines offending model with children and vulnerable adults exploited to move [and store] drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims. Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including schools, further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, special educational needs schools, children’s homes and care homes. Children are often recruited to move drugs and money between locations and are known to be exposed to techniques such as ‘plugging’, where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs create drug debts and can threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

One of the ways of identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes (both from home and school), when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral to the National Referral Mechanism should be considered. If a child is suspected to be at risk of or involved in county lines, a safeguarding referral should be considered alongside consideration of availability of local services/third sector providers who offer support to victims of county lines exploitation.

7.9 Serious Violence

Some young people are more vulnerable to serious violence than others. Risk factors include:

- being male
- having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school
- having experienced child maltreatment
- having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.

All staff are trained to be aware of the indicators, which may signal children are at risk from, or are involved with, serious violent crime. These may include increased;

- absence from school or college
- a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups
- a significant decline in educational performance
- signs of self harm or a significant change in wellbeing
- or signs of assault or unexplained injuries.

Staff are made aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves in many ways and can often overlap with one another. Some behaviours linked to drug taking, alcohol abuse, truanting, gender-based violence and sexting also put children in danger. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation.

7.10 Child on child abuse

Recognising and minimising the risk of child-on-child abuse

Great Ballard School takes a zero-tolerance approach to child-on-child abuse. It recognises that all children are capable of abusing their peers and all staff should be aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves in this way at any time. There is a clear recognition that, even if there are no reported cases of child -on-child abuse, this does not mean it is not happening within the school.

Staff should be clear that abusive comments and interactions should not be treated as “just banter” or “boys being boys” and can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, an unsafe environment for children and young people and a culture that normalises abuse. Examples of abuse might include (but are not limited to):

- Bullying (including cyber-bullying, prejudice based and discriminatory bullying)
- Physical abuse (which can include hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling or other physical harm)
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (sometimes known as ‘teenage relationship abuse’)
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent (e.g., forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually or to engage in sexual activity with a third party)
- Gender based violence (it is more likely that girls will be the victims and boys the perpetrators)
- Sexual violence such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence)
- Sexual harassment such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse.
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery) initiation type violence and rituals.
- Upskirting. This typically involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or to cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm.
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

The school recognises that children with special educational needs and disabilities can be more prone to child-on-child group abuse and isolation than other children (even if they may exhibit no outward signs) and will consider extra pastoral support for those children. Children who are LGBTQ+ can be targeted by their peers. In some cases, a pupil who is perceived by their peers to be LGBTQ+ (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who identify as LGBTQ+.

The School recognises that children can be particularly vulnerable in residential settings and are alert to the potential for child -on-child abuse during residential trips or events at school.

The school's culture of respect and empathy ensures children recognise the impact they can have on others and they are encouraged to "lift" those around them through kindness, leadership and service. Similar values are instilled through the school's pastoral care programme, its holistic curriculum and its PSHE and assembly programmes.

A bullying incident will be treated as a child protection concern where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm and will warrant a response under these procedures rather than the School's Behaviour and Discipline Policy.

A pupil against whom an allegation of abuse has been made may be suspended from the school during the investigation. The School will take advice from the West Sussex Children Safeguarding Partnership (WSCSP) on the investigation of such allegations and will take all appropriate action to ensure the safety and welfare of all pupils involved including the alleged victim and perpetrator. If it is necessary for a pupil to be interviewed by the police in relation to allegations of abuse, the School will ensure that, subject to the advice of the SCSB, parents are informed as soon as possible and that the pupils involved are supported during the interview by an appropriate adult (DSL, DDSL or other senior member of staff) and until the investigation is completed. Confidentiality will be an important consideration and advice will be sought as necessary from the SCSB or police as appropriate.

Victims and perpetrators of child on child abuse will be offered support by the School, as appropriate e.g., through counselling and other professional services.

7.11 Sexting (YPSI)

Sexting or sending nudes is when someone shares a sexual message, naked or semi-naked image, video or text message with another person. It doesn't have to be a nude image of them and could be an image of someone else. Young people can send nudes using phones, tablets and laptops and can share them across any app, site or game, including during a livestream.

Some of the risks of sexting or sending and sharing nudes for children and young people are:

- losing control of the images, videos or messages and how they're shared. Once something's shared online it's public and can be saved or copied by others.
- blackmail, bullying and harm. Young people can have their photos, messages or videos shared without their consent or be bullied about them. This can lead to them feeling difficult emotions like distress or embarrassment and shame.

The law says that creating or sharing sexual images or videos of a child under 18 is illegal, even if the person doing it, is a child. This includes:

- sending sexual messages to a child
- a child taking an explicit photo or video of themselves or a friend
- sharing an explicit image or video of a child, even if it's shared between children of the same age
- having, downloading or storing an explicit image or video of a child, even if the child gave their permission for it to be taken.
- sharing an explicit image or video of a child is illegal, even if it's shared between children of the same age.
- Sharenting or adults sharing a photo of a child to raise awareness is also illegal.

Issues relating to sexting are covered in the school's PSHE/RSE programme and the issue of Youth Produced Sexual Imagery is covered in detail in the school's Acceptable Use Policy (AUP). Great Ballard aims to respond appropriately to any incidents of sexting that might involve the children and young people using the procedures below as a guideline.

Procedures

If an incident comes to the attention of a member of staff they should;

- **Never view or save explicit images, videos or messages.**
- NOT delete the imagery or ask the young person to delete it.
- NOT ask the child/children or young person(s) who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery. **This is the responsibility of the DSL (or equivalent)**
- NOT share information about the incident with other members of staff, the young person(s) it involves or their, or other, parents and / or carers.
- Explain to the young person(s) that you need to report it and reassure them that they will receive support and help from the DSL (or equivalent).

The DSL may in exceptional circumstances view images with the prior approval:

- a. It is the only way to make a decision whether to involve other agencies, as there is insufficient information available as to its contents.
- b. It is necessary to report the image to a website or agency to have it taken down; or a pupil has reported the image directly to a member of staff in circumstances where viewing the image is unavoidable.
- c. Any member of staff who views an indecent image should be given appropriate support

If any devices need to be confiscated (whether in order to view the image(s) or to pass evidence to the appropriate authority), they should be turned off and locked away securely until they are required.

If an electronic device that is prohibited by the school rules has been seized and the member of staff has reasonable grounds to suspect that it contains evidence in relation to an offence, or that it contains a pornographic image of a child or an extreme pornographic image, the device will be given to the police

If images have been shared online and cannot now be deleted by the person who shared them, the School should consider reporting the images to the relevant web host or service provider (if an option is provided). Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP), the Internet Watch Foundation or ChildLine should be contacted if the website does not provide this option.

Where viewing an image is unavoidable:

- viewing should take place on School premises wherever possible
- a senior member of staff should be present to monitor and support the person viewing the image. This member of staff should not view the image.
- full details of the viewing must be recorded in the School's safeguarding records, including who was present, the date and time, the nature of the image and the reasons for viewing it

7.12 Preventing Radicalisation

Some children are at risk of being radicalised: adopting beliefs and engaging in activities that are harmful, criminal or dangerous. Staff acknowledge the need for a culture of vigilance to be present in the school to

support safeguarding, including an awareness and sensitivity to attitudinal changes of pupils which may indicate they are at risk of radicalisation.

Staff will assess the level of risk to identify the most appropriate referral, which could include reference to [Channel](#) (an early intervention multi-agency process designed to safeguard vulnerable people from being drawn into violent extremist or terrorist behaviour) or Children's Social Care. Contact details for support and advice on the Prevent Duty can be found on the contact page of this policy.

All staff receive training to help to identify signs of extremism. Opportunities are provided in the curriculum to enable pupils to discuss issues of religion, ethnicity and culture and the School follows the DfE advice "Promoting Fundamental British Values as part of SMSC (Spiritual, Moral Social and Cultural) (spiritual, moral, social and cultural education) in Schools (2014)".

Radicalisation is defined as the act or process of making a person more radical or favouring of extreme or fundamental changes in political, economic or social conditions, institutions or habits of the mind.

Extremism is the promotion or advancement of an ideology based on violence, hatred or intolerance, that aims to:

1. negate or destroy the fundamental rights and freedoms of others; or
2. undermine, overturn or replace the UK's system of liberal parliamentary democracy and democratic rights; or
3. intentionally create a permissive environment for others to achieve the results in (1) or (2).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/new-definition-of-extremism-2024/new-definition-of-extremism-2024>

Behaviour that could constitute extremism

Behaviour against a group, or members of it, that seeks to negate or destroy their rights to live equally under the law and free of fear, threat, violence, and discrimination. Including:

- Using, threatening, inciting, justifying, glorifying or excusing violence towards a group in order to dissuade them from using their legally defined rights and freedoms.

Great Ballard School has a zero-tolerance approach to extremist behaviour for all community members. We rely on our strong values to steer our work and ensure the pastoral care of our pupils protects them from exposure to negative influences.

Great Ballard School is fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all our children. As a school we recognise that safeguarding against radicalisation is no different from safeguarding against any other vulnerability. All staff are expected to uphold and promote the said fundamental principles of British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

Warning Signs/Indicators of Concern with regard to extremism:

There is no such thing as a "typical extremist": those who become involved in extremist actions come from a range of backgrounds and experiences, and most individuals, even those who hold radical views, do not become involved in violent extremist activity.

Pupils may become susceptible to radicalisation through a range of social, personal and environmental factors. It is vital that staff are able to recognise those vulnerabilities. However, this list is not exhaustive, nor does it mean that all young people experiencing the above are at risk of radicalisation for the purposes of violent extremism.

Factors which may make pupils more vulnerable may include:

- **Identity Crisis:** the pupil is distanced from their cultural/religious heritage and experiences discomfort about their place in society.
- **Personal Crisis:** the pupil may be experiencing family tensions; a sense of isolation; low self-esteem; they may have dissociated from their existing friendship group and become involved with a new and different group of friends; they may be searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging.
- **Personal Circumstances:** migration; local community tensions and events affecting the pupil's country or region of origin may contribute to a sense of grievance that is triggered by personal experience of racism or discrimination or aspects of Government policy.
- **Unmet Aspirations:** the pupil may have perceptions of injustice; a feeling of failure; a rejection from civic life.
- **Experiences of Criminality:** involvement with criminal groups, imprisonment, poor resettlement or reintegration.
- **Special Educational Needs:** SEN/D pupils may experience difficulties with social interaction, empathy with others, understanding the consequences of their actions or explaining what they are worried about.

Pupils who are vulnerable to radicalisation may also be experiencing:

- Substance and alcohol misuse
- Peer pressure
- Influence from older people or via the Internet
- Bullying
- Domestic violence
- Race/hate crime

Behaviours which may indicate a child is at risk of being radicalised or exposed to extremist views could include:

- Being in contact with extremist recruiters and/or spending increasing time in the company of other suspected extremists
- Loss of interest in other friends and activities not associated with the extremist ideology, group or cause
- Pupils accessing extremist material online, including through social networking sites
- Possessing or accessing materials or symbols associated with an extremist cause
- Using extremist narratives and a global ideology to explain personal disadvantage
- Pupils voicing opinions drawn from extremist ideologies and narratives, this may include justifying the use of violence to solve societal issues
- Graffiti symbols, writing or art work promoting extremist messages or images
- Significant changes to appearance and/or behaviour increasingly centred on an extremist ideology, group or cause
- Changing in style of dress or personal appearance to accord with the group
- Attempts to recruit others to the group/cause
- Using insulting or derogatory names for another group
- Increase in prejudice-related incidents committed by that person – these may include:
 - Physical or verbal assault
 - Provocative behaviour
 - Damage to property
 - Derogatory name-calling
 - Possession of prejudice-related materials
 - Prejudice-related ridicule or name-calling

- Inappropriate forms of address
 - Refusal to co-operate
 - Attempts to recruit to prejudice-related organisations
 - Condoning or supporting violence towards others
-
- Parental reports of changes in behaviour, friendship or actions and requests for assistance
 - Partner schools, local authority services, and police reports of issues affecting pupils in other schools.

Contact details for support and advice on the Prevent Duty can be found in Annex B of KCSIE and below.

- The Home Office statutory Prevent duty guidance (2023) can be accessed here - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance>
- The Channel General Awareness course can be accessed [here](#)

7.13 Honour Based Abuse (HBA – Forced Marriage and FGM)

HBA can include forced marriage and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). This term recognises both violent and non-violent forms of abuse. All staff will be alert to possible indicators of HBA and should contact the DSL as a matter of urgency if they are made aware or are concerned about any child or young person.

- Guidance on the warning signs of HBA can be found on pages 38-41 of the multi-agency statutory guidance of FGM, which can be accessed [here](#).
- Multi-agency guidelines on handling cases of forced marriage on pages 13-14 can be accessed [here](#)

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is the collective name given to a range of procedures involving the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, the practice is a criminal offence under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003. Any person found guilty of an offence under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 is liable to a maximum penalty of 14 years imprisonment or a fine, or both.

It has no health benefits and harms girls and women in many ways. The practice, which is most commonly carried out without anaesthetic, can cause intense pain, distress, and long-term health consequences, including difficulties in childbirth. FGM is carried out on girls of any age, from young babies to older teenagers and adult women, so staff are trained to be aware of risk indicators. Many such procedures are carried out abroad and staff should be particularly alert to suspicions or concerns expressed by female pupils about going on a long holiday during the summer vacation period

Risk factors for FGM include:

- low level of integration into UK society
- mother or a sister who has undergone FGM
- girls who are withdrawn from PSHE
- visiting female elder from the country of origin
- being taken on a long holiday to the country of origin
- talk about a 'special' procedure to become a woman

Symptoms of FGM

FGM may be likely if there is a visiting female elder, there is talk of a special procedure or celebration to become a woman, or parents wish to take their daughter out-of-school to visit an 'at-risk' country (especially before the summer holidays), or parents who wish to withdraw their children from learning about FGM.

Indications that FGM may have already taken place may include:

- Difficulty walking, sitting or standing and looking uncomfortable
- Spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating
- Spending long periods of time away from a classroom during the day with bladder or menstrual problems
- frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems
- prolonged or repeated absences from school, especially with noticeable behaviour changes (e.g., withdrawal or depression) on the girl's return
- reluctance to undergo normal medical examinations
- confiding in a professional without being explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear
- talking about pain or discomfort between her legs

The Serious Crime Act 2015 sets out a legal duty on professionals (including teachers) to notify police when they discover that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. In schools, this will usually come from a disclosure and staff should speak to the DSL (or DDSL) immediately. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases or in cases where a woman is 18 or over. In these cases, teachers should follow safeguarding procedures.

7.14 Children absent from Education

Children absent from education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) later in life.

Why might children be absent from education?

Here are some of the reasons why children of compulsory school age may not be on any school roll:

- Failure to start school at age five
- Failure to transfer to secondary school
- Moved to a new area and no school place available
- No suitable SEND provision available
Illegally deleted from the school roll, for example:
 - Unofficial exclusion – child ceases to attend
 - Withdrawn by parent or carer but not receiving other education

Monitoring attendance

The school will monitor all pupil absences from school and promptly address concerns about irregular attendance with the parent/carer. Following the now statutory guidance '[working together to safeguard attendance](#)', Great Ballard school's [Attendance policy](#) is our main protocol. Knowing where children are during school hours is an extremely important aspect of safeguarding. Absence from school can be an indicator of abuse and neglect and may raise concerns about child sexual exploitation.

- Follow-up unexplained and or persistent absences of any child with a telephone call from the School on the morning of the first day of absence.
- Notify social services if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a pupil who is on the child safeguarding register
- Contact the Local Authority if any child's unauthorised absences extend for more than 20 consecutive days or where a child's whereabouts and safety cannot be assured.

Children moving schools

It is essential that schools support the local authority in assuring that they can identify, and track children absent from education until they are back in school or receiving suitable education elsewhere.

- Notify the Local Authority when a child joins or leaves Great Ballard at any point before Year 11.
- This should be done before the child is removed from the admissions register
- The West Sussex Policy and guidance on Child Missing Education can be found [here](#).

7.15 Modern Slavery

Modern slavery encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Exploitation can take many forms, including sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery, servitude, forced criminality and the removal of organs. Further information on the signs that someone may be a victim of modern slavery, the support available to victims and how to refer them to the National Referral Mechanism is available in the statutory guidance "Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims (May 2022)".

7.16 Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. That abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional. Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn.

7.17 Cybercrime

This is criminal activity committed using computers and/or the internet. It is broadly categorised as either 'cyber-enabled' (crimes that can happen off-line but are enabled at scale and at speed on-line) or 'cyber dependent' (crimes that can be committed only by using a computer).

Cyberdependent crimes include:

- unauthorised access to computers (illegal 'hacking'), for example accessing a school's computer network to look for test paper answers or change grades awarded;
- denial of Service (Dos or DDoS) attacks or 'booting'. These are attempts to make a computer, network, or website unavailable by overwhelming it with internet traffic from multiple sources; and,
- making, supplying, or obtaining malware (malicious software) such as viruses, spyware, ransomware, botnets, and Remote Access Trojans with the intent to commit further offence, including those above.

Children with particular skill and interest in computing and technology may inadvertently or deliberately stray into cyber-dependent crime. If there are concerns about a child in this area, the DSL (or a deputy), should consider referring into the Cyber Choices programme.

8. Further safeguarding issues

8.1 Visiting Speakers

On occasions visiting speakers will come into the School to address pupils. We welcome different insights and perspectives from visitors to the School. Visiting speakers will however be briefed with regards to our expectations of what is suitable. Visiting speakers will be expected to understand that, where appropriate, their session should actively promote the British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and at no point undermine these.

The School will risk assess before agreeing to a visiting Speaker being allowed to attend the School taking into account any vetting requirements considered appropriate in the circumstances and may include a DBS check if relevant. Where appropriate, the School will request that visiting speakers provide copies of any materials they will use in advance of the visit.

Visiting Speakers, whilst on the School site, will be supervised by a School employee. On attending the School, Visiting Speakers will be required to show original current identification documents including a photograph such as a passport or photo card driving licence. The School shall also keep a formal register of visiting speakers retained in line with its Data Protection Policy.

8.2 Vulnerable Children & Ongoing Pupil Concerns

Vulnerable Children include those who have a social worker and those children and young people (up to the age of 25) with education, health and care (EHC) plans. Other ongoing pupil concerns are listed as part of the Early Help assessment processes in school. Pupils who are not officially classified as a 'vulnerable child,' but where worries or concerns have been raised will be placed on the welfare list for monitoring and supporting by the DSL team. Government guidance on mental health and behaviour in schools explains how mental health issues may impact a young person's behaviour. We continue to offer additional support (counselling, mentoring, medical supervision) but these will be delivered online or over the telephone.

9. Mental Health

At our school, we aim to promote positive mental health for every member of our staff and student body. We pursue this aim using both universal, whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable students.

In addition to promoting positive mental health, we aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health. Children in every classroom in our school will be suffering from diagnosable mental health issues. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health policies and procedures we can promote a safe and stable environment for students affected both directly, and indirectly by mental ill health.

All staff are aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Staff receive training in mental health (Mental Health First Aid and through INSET) and the school has a **Mental Health Lead** with time to educate, support and review the school's mental health procedures.

All staff are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one. Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children's experiences can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education. If staff have a mental health concern

about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following their child protection policy and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead, a deputy or the school Mental Health Lead. The department for Education has published advice and guidance on Preventing and Tackling Bullying, and Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools (which may also be useful for Schools).

The following resources also provide useful support and guidance:

- [Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges \(Gov.uk\)](#)
- [Rise Above](#)
- [Young Minds](#)
- [Mind](#)
- [Anna Freud](#)

Please also consult the school's **Positive Mental Health Policy**

10. Procedures for managing allegations against staff, volunteers and Head

The School's procedures for dealing with allegations against staff (and volunteers who work with children) aims to strike a balance between the need to protect children from abuse and the need to protect staff and volunteers from vexatious allegations. The DSL will make every reasonable effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity whilst such an allegation is being investigated or considered. The DSL will liaise with the LADO, police and social services as to managing confidentiality as appropriate. The School's procedures for managing allegations against staff (including the Head and DSL) and volunteers follows Departmental guidance and West Sussex Children's Safeguarding Partnership arrangements. They apply when staff, including volunteers, have (or are alleged to have):

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a student, or may have harmed a student.
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a student.
- Behaved towards a pupil in a way that indicated that they would pose a risk of harm if they were to work regularly or closely with children.
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

Should the allegation of abuse be made against a member of staff, supply teacher or a volunteer, the member of staff should immediately inform the Head and DSL. If an allegation is reported to the DSL, the DSL will keep the Head informed. Where the Head and DSL are absent or is the subject of the allegation or concern, reports should be made to the Senior Deputy or failing that; the proprietor. Where an allegation relates to a member of supply staff provided by an agency, the agency should be fully involved.

Allegations of abuse against the Headmaster

Should the allegation be against the Head (or a director), the DSL or staff member will immediately inform the Proprietor. Where an allegation is against the Head, the Head must not be informed of the allegation prior to contact with the Proprietor and the LADO. It will be the Proprietor's responsibility to contact the LADO, but all staff know they can contact the LADO directly using the contacts provided in this document.

Allegations of abuse against the Proprietor: If the allegation concerns the Proprietor, the DSL or staff member will **immediately** inform the West Sussex Children's Services Integrated Front Door, **without** notifying the Proprietor.

In all cases, Advice will be sought from the LADO within 24 hours of the allegations being made. The school should not investigate before referring to the LADO. The individual against whom the allegation has been made will be informed immediately after the result of any initial investigation authorised or conducted by the LADO is known. Great Ballard School will always appoint a member of staff to keep the person informed of the likely course of action and the progress of the case (as far as is allowable in accordance within the statutory guidelines) and to help manage and monitor their wellbeing.

If the LADO or any of the statutory child protection agencies decide to take the case further, any staff member concerned may be suspended by Great Ballard School if this is felt appropriate. The reasons and justification for suspension will be recorded and the staff member informed of them. Where a member of the residential staff is so suspended pending an investigation of a child protection nature, suitable arrangements must be put in place for alternative accommodation away from children. Great Ballard School recognises it has a duty of care to staff but may take action in the event of allegations against staff in accordance with its disciplinary procedures.

The conclusion of an investigation (internal or external) will record whether it is substantiated (sufficient evidence either to prove or disprove it), unsubstantiated (insufficient evidence either to prove or disprove it), false (sufficient evidence to disprove it) or malicious (sufficient evidence to disprove it and that there has been a deliberate act to deceive). If it is established that the allegation is malicious, no details of the allegation will be retained on the individual's personnel records. In all other circumstances a record will be made of the decision and retained on the individual's personnel file in accordance with DfE advice. A copy will only be provided to the individual concerned following consultation with appropriate agencies and agreement has been reached as to what information can be disclosed. Allegations proven to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious will not be included in employer references, but the DSL will consider whether the person making the allegation is in need of support.

During the course of the investigation, Great Ballard School, in consultation with the LADO, will decide what information should be given to parents, staff and other pupils and how press enquiries are to be dealt with. In reaching their decision due consideration will be given to the provisions in the Education Act 2011 and in Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023) relating to reporting restrictions identifying teachers who are the subject of allegations from pupils.

Allegations against a member of staff who is no longer at the School (including historical allegations) should be referred to the police. Similarly, allegations against a teacher who is no longer working at the School will also be referred to the police. Any pupils who are involved will receive appropriate care. Staff should also have regard to the Staff Code of Conduct to minimise the risk of allegations being made.

Allegation of abuse of a child who is not a pupil at the school: Allegations suggesting that a member of staff was abusing a child who was not a pupil at the School would immediately be referred to the West Sussex Children's Services Integrated Front Door. The employee would be advised of the allegation, making it clear that the school would not play any part in the investigatory process. The employee would be advised of the possibility of facing suspension, re-assignment to other duties etc. in exactly the same way as if the allegation had involved a pupil at Great Ballard School. If the allegation subsequently proved to be unfounded, he or she would be given full support by the school in resuming their career.

All allegations of professional misconduct should be referred to the Teachers [Regulation Agency](#). Any member of staff who is dismissed or would have been removed should be referred to the Disclosure and Barring Service ([DBS](#)).

Low Level Concerns

It is recognised that not all concerns raised about staff will reach the threshold for referral but all concerns should be taken seriously and be properly documented. Staff themselves may have concerns about behaviours that do not immediately (or in isolation) lead to an allegation being made. **The LOW-LEVEL CONCERNS POLICY** sets out a framework whereby staff are expected to report concerns in detail, in writing, no matter how small,

about their own behaviour or that of another member of staff, volunteer, supply teacher, contractor or other person working in school. The purpose of the policy is to help create and embed a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which the clear values and expected behaviour set out in our Child Protection and Safeguarding policy are lived, monitored, and reinforced.

All concerns logged are reviewed in context by the Head/DSL and, where appropriate the SLT or welfare team. Records of all low-level concerns, the decision making process, response and lessons learned, are kept and monitored. This ensures patterns of concerning; inappropriate or problematic behaviour are spotted, and issues are addressed (for example through the school's disciplinary procedures or by referral to the LADO). Concerns submitted about contractors or supply staff should be notified to their employers. Please consult the **LOW-LEVEL CONCERNS POLICY** for further details.

11. Private Fostering

A private fostering arrangement is one that is made privately (without the involvement of a local authority) for the care of a child under the age of 16 years (under 18, if disabled) by someone other than a parent or close relative, in their own home, with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more.

A close family relative is defined as a 'grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt' and includes halfsiblings and stepparents; it does not include great-aunts or uncles, great grandparents or cousins.

Parents and private foster carers both have a legal duty to inform the relevant local authority at least six weeks before the arrangement is due to start; not to do so is a criminal offence.

Whilst most privately fostered children are appropriately supported and looked after, they are a potentially vulnerable group who should be monitored by the local authority, particularly when the child has come from another country. This vulnerability also applies to previously looked-after children. In some cases, privately fostered children are affected by abuse and neglect, or be involved in trafficking, child sexual exploitation or modern-day slavery.

Schools have a mandatory duty to report to the local authority where they are aware or suspect that a child is subject to a private fostering arrangement. Although schools have a duty to inform the local authority, there is no duty for anyone, including the private foster carer or social workers to inform the school. However, it should be clear to the school who has parental responsibility.

Staff should notify the DSL when they become aware of private fostering arrangements. The DSL will speak to the family of the child involved to check that they are aware of their duty to inform the local authority. The school itself has a duty to inform the local authority of the private fostering arrangements.

On admission to the school, we will take steps to verify the relationship of the adults to the child who is being registered.

12. Safer Employment Practices

The School follows the Government's recommendations for the safer recruitment and employment of staff who work with children, acting at all times in compliance with the Independent School Standards Regulations.

In line with Part 3 of the DfE's guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (KCSIE), the School Board of Directors ensures that robust recruitment procedures exist that prevent people who pose a risk of harm from working with pupils. They ensure that the school adheres to statutory responsibilities to check all staff who work with children, takes proportionate decisions on whether to ask for any checks beyond the minimum required,

and ensures volunteers are appropriately supervised. Organisations providing contractors or consultants working on site are asked for assurances that where relevant and required, their personnel have been suitably vetted in line with legal requirements.

As part of carrying out safe-recruitment procedures under KCSIE, members of the teaching and non-teaching staff at the School, including part-time staff, temporary and supply staff, and visiting staff, such as musicians and sports coaches, are subject to the necessary statutory child protection checks before starting work. For most appointments, an enhanced DBS check with 'barred list' information will be appropriate. A DBS certificate will be obtained from the candidate before or as soon as practicable after appointment. Alternatively, if the applicant has subscribed to it and gives permission, the School may undertake an online update check through the DBS Update Service.

Further to the DBS check, anyone appointed to carry out teaching work will require an additional check to ensure they are not prohibited from teaching by order of the Secretary of State. Further checks will also include a check for information about any teacher directions, sanctions or restrictions that a European Economic Area (EEA) professional regulating authority has imposed. Those undertaking management posts will be subject to prohibition from management of independent schools' checks.

The School is aware of its duty to refer staff to the DBS who are suspended or redeployed because of concerns that they pose a risk of harm. This will happen as soon as possible, and ordinarily on the conclusion of an investigation.

The School is aware of its obligation to preserve records which contain information about allegations of sexual abuse for the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA), for the term of the inquiry (further information can be found on the IICSA website). All other records should be retained at least until the accused has reached normal pension age or for a period of 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.

The School ensures that at least one of the persons who conducts an interview has completed safer recruitment training.

All Directors, volunteers, agency staff contractors working regularly during term-time (such as contract catering staff) are also subject to the statutory DBS checks.

Confirmation is obtained that appropriate child protection checks and procedures apply to any personnel employed by another organisation and working with the School's pupils at either school or on another site. Should the School develop concerns about an existing staff member's suitability to work with children; it will carry out all relevant checks as if the individual were a new member of staff.

Please also refer to the School's **Staff Recruitment Policy** and Procedure for further details.

13. Early Years provision safeguarding arrangements

Disqualification from working in childcare

Where staff work in, or are involved in the management of, the School's early years or provision of care of pupils under the age of eight, the School will take steps to check whether those staff are disqualified under the Childcare Act 2006. These checks will be undertaken pre-appointment, and from time to time during employment. This forms part of the School's safer recruitment practices, further details of which can be found in the School's Safer Recruitment Policy.

The School records all checks of staff employed to work in or manage relevant childcare on the Single Central Register. This includes the date disqualification checks were completed. Where a member of staff is found to be

disqualified or if there is doubt over that issue then, pending resolution, the School will remove them from the work from which they are or may be disqualified. Suspension or dismissal will not be an automatic response; the School will consider if there is scope in principle to redeploy them with other age groups or in other work from which they are not disqualified, subject to assessing the risks and taking advice from the designated officer when appropriate.

Use of mobile phones and cameras

The School's policy on the use of mobile phones and cameras in the setting can be found in the School's Acceptable Use Policy and the School's policy on Mobile Phone, Camera, iPod and Photographs. A summary is included below.

DSL for the EYFS

The practitioner designated to take lead responsibility for safeguarding children in the early years settings is Katie Morgan and Yvonne Barr, Head of Pre Prep.

Duty to notify Ofsted

The School will inform Ofsted of any significant event which is likely to affect the suitability of any person who is in regular contact with children on the premises where childcare is provided. For example, where the School is satisfied that a person working in a relevant setting falls within one of the disqualification criteria. Any significant event must be notified to Ofsted as soon as reasonably practicable, but at the latest within 14 days of the date the School became aware (or ought reasonably to have become aware) of it. The School will notify Ofsted within 14 days of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working or looking after children at the premises (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere).

14. Use of mobile Phones and use of photographs

The Mobile Phones and Devices Policy outlines all use expectations and rules – for students, staff and parents when on site. Below are key extracts.

At Great Ballard school, we are committed to creating a calm, safe and focused learning environment for every student. Consistent with the Department for Education's guidance on mobile phones in schools [here](#), we operate a mobile phone-free school day for all pupils. This means that throughout the school day – including lessons, between lessons, breaktimes and lunchtime – pupils must not use or access mobile phones or similar personal smart technology.

Student use

- The school day is mobile phone-free by default for all pupils. Mobile phones and similar devices must be switched off and kept out of sight throughout the school day.
- Where phones are brought to school, they are stored securely and not accessed until the end of the day. Students in the prep and senior school should turn their phones off on arrival to school, and hand them into their form tutors to be safely stored for the day. Students will collect these at the end of academic lessons 16:30.
- Headphones should never be worn when moving around site.
- Good digital etiquette should be followed at all times, according to the school's ICT Acceptable Use policy.
- In exceptional circumstances, Mobile phones can be used in the classroom only with the teacher's permission (for specific academic purposes, e.g. in art/graphics/photography lessons)

Sanctions and procedures

- Misuse of a mobile phone will result in sanctions, from behaviour points and confiscation, to detentions and letters home. Please refer to the Behaviour Policy [here](#).
- If a mobile phone is being used inappropriately a member of staff will confiscate it and hand it either to the form tutor or SLT (senior leadership) member. Confiscated devices should be handled lawfully and proportionately.
- In exceptional cases (e.g., medical needs, disability adjustments), reasonable adaptations may be agreed in advance.

Staff use

West Sussex Safeguarding Children's Partnership allows staff to bring in mobile phones for their own personal use. If they need to make an emergency call, they must do so either in the staff room, the Headmaster's office, an empty classroom or outside of the school grounds. Staff should provide the school number to family and next of kin so in an emergency the member of staff can be contacted on the school phone.

There is significant potential for camera mobile phones to be misused in schools. These can all too easily become an instrument of bullying or harassment directed against pupils and/or staff members.

- No member of staff should ever use their own mobile phone to photograph a student or students, or allow themselves to be photographed by students.
- The school will provide adequate mobile phones, tablets, iPads, to be used for this purpose by staff to photograph students.

Procedures

Use of photographs

We operate the following policy on our website regarding the use of photographs, to ensure the privacy and safety of children at the school:

- where a child is named, no photograph of that child is displayed.
- where a photograph is used which shows a child, no name is displayed and
- where children are named, only their first names are given.

The school follows a policy of seeking parents' permission before using images that show children on the website, social media or in the local press. The list showing pupils who are barred from appearing in the press, or on the website, is kept in the School Office and is available whenever photographers are present.

No other private information about children is ever published on the website such as surnames or contact details. By observing these points Great Ballard School ensures that visitors to the website cannot link images of children to the family names of children. When choosing photographs for the website, we are mindful of the way children may appear in them, and try not to include images that are in any way inappropriate.

15. Online Safety

It is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. An effective whole school and college approach to online safety empowers a school or college to protect and

educate pupils, students, and staff in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any concerns where appropriate.

The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable and ever evolving, but can be categorised into four areas of risk:

Content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful content, for example: pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation, extremism, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories.

Contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example: peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other.

Conduct: online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images and online bullying.

Commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. If you feel your pupils, students or staff are at risk, please report it to the Anti-Phishing Working Group (<https://apwg.org/>)

The School will ensure that:

- Appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place to keep children safe online. This aims to reduce the risk of children being exposed to illegal, inappropriate and harmful materials online; reduce the risk of children being subjected to harmful online interaction with others; and help manage online behaviour that can increase a child's likelihood of, or causes, harm
- Parents have access to resources about online safety via a Digital School Online Membership
- Children are taught about safeguarding online
- Staff are equipped with the knowledge to safeguard children online by attending online safety training.
- Online resources as listed in KCSIE will continue to be accessible to the Internet Safety Leads and DSL/DDSLs and this is reflected in our delivery of this, both as part of the PHSE curriculum and in our general management of online safety. The PHSE Association guidance is of particular support to the school.

The School's ICT and Internet Usage Policy also sets out the School's approach to online safety. Additional information is available in Annex D of KCSIE on how to support keeping children safe online when they are learning at home.

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

The Department has published Generative AI: product safety expectations to support schools to use generative artificial intelligence safely, and explains how filtering and monitoring requirements apply to the use of generative AI in education. DfE guidance below outlines generative artificial intelligence (AI) and explains how filtering and monitoring requirements apply to the use of generative AI in education and supports schools to use generative AI safely.

[Generative AI: product safety expectations - GOV.UK](#)

[Using AI in education settings: support materials - GOV.UK](#)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/generative-ai-product-safety-expectations/generative-ai-product-safety-expectations>

We also make use of the resources promoted by the DfE such as:

- The UK Safer Internet Centre (www.saferinternet.org.uk)
- CEOP's *Thinkuknow* website (www.thinkuknow.co.uk)

16. Filtering and monitoring

Great Ballard school are doing all that we reasonably can to limit children's exposure to the above risks from the school's or college's IT system. We ensure the school has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place and regularly review their effectiveness. The leadership team and relevant staff have an awareness of the internal systems in use, manage them effectively and know how to escalate concerns when identified.

Great Ballard makes use of the Department for Education publishing filtering and monitoring standards ([Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges - Filtering and monitoring standards for schools and colleges - Guidance - GOV.UK](#) (www.gov.uk))

This sets out that schools and colleges should:

- Identify and assign roles and responsibilities to manage filtering and monitoring systems.
- Review filtering and monitoring provision at least annually.
- Block harmful and inappropriate content without unreasonably impacting teaching and learning.
- Have effective monitoring strategies in place that meet their safeguarding needs

For more information on the schools filtering and Monitoring procedures, please consult the **ICT – E-Safety Policy and Procedures** document.

Additional guidance on filtering and monitoring can be found at: UK Safer Internet Centre: “appropriate” filtering and monitoring.

<https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/teachers-and-school-staff/appropriate-filtering-and-monitoring>

South West Grid for Learning (www.swgfl.org.uk) have created a tool to check whether a school or college's filtering provider is signed up to relevant lists (CSA content, Sexual Content, Terrorist content, Your Internet Connection Blocks Child Abuse & Terrorist Content).

17. Whistle-blowing

If staff have concerns about poor or unsafe practices or potential failures in the School's safeguarding practices, these should be raised in accordance with Great Ballard's confidential reporting (Whistleblowing Policy) set out in the Staff Handbook. There will be no disciplinary action taken against a member of staff for making such a report provided that it is done in good faith.

If staff feel unable to raise an issue with the School or that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, they may use other whistleblowing channels, such as the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline (Tel: 0800 0280285 or email: help@nspcc.org.uk).

Alternatively staff can raise concerns with Children's Social Care by calling 01403 229900 Local Authority Designated Officer via [Online Portal](#)

18. Staff External Referrals

Great Ballard School follows Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) guidance and procedures regarding referrals and barring decisions as well as the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (Prescribed Criteria and Miscellaneous Provisions) Regulations 2009. Separate to involvement of the LADO, all schools have a legal duty to refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child, or if there is reason to believe that a member of staff has committed one of a number of listed offences, and who has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) in regulated activity, or would have been removed had they not left.

The DSL will make such a referral as soon as possible after the resignation or dismissal of any individual (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or a pupil) whose services are no longer used because they are considered unsuitable to work with children. This includes dismissal, non-renewal of a fixed term contract, no longer using supply teacher engaged directly or supplied by an agency, terminating the placement of a trainee or volunteer, no longer using staff employed by a contractor and resignation and voluntary withdrawal from any of the above.

Further, or in the alternative, if an investigation leads to the dismissal or resignation prior to dismissal of a member of teaching staff specifically, Great Ballard School will consider making a referral to the National School for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) as required by sections 141D and 141E of the Education Act 2002 and a prohibition order may be appropriate (because that teacher has displayed unacceptable professional conduct, conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute or a conviction at any time for a relevant offence). The Secretary of State may investigate the case, and if it is found there is a case to answer, must then decide whether to make a prohibition order in respect of the person.

19. Restraint and use of reasonable force

What is Reasonable Force?

“Reasonable force” refers to a wide range of strategies that involve some level of physical contact with pupils and may be used by school staff where necessary. As outlined in the updated Spring 2026 guidance and reflected in the *Great Ballard Restraint and Use of Reasonable Force Policy (2026)*, any use of force must always be lawful, proportionate, necessary, and in the best interests of the child's safety and welfare.

Force is typically used in two ways:

- **Control:** This can include passive contact, such as positioning oneself between pupils or blocking a pupil's path, or active contact, such as guiding a pupil by the arm to a safer space.
- **Restraint:** This involves more direct physical intervention to prevent harm, such as holding a pupil back or separating pupils in a fight.

In all cases, “reasonable” means that no more force than necessary is used, taking into account the pupil's age, needs, and the context of the situation. Staff must make dynamic, professional judgements and should always aim to minimise risk of harm or injury, although the guidance recognises that in exceptional circumstances this may not always be possible.

In line with both national guidance and school policy, the primary emphasis is on prevention and de-escalation. Physical intervention should:

- Only be used as a last resort where other strategies have failed or are not appropriate
- Never be used as a punishment, or out of anger or frustration
- Be proportionate to the level of risk presented
- Be stopped as soon as it is safe to do so

When Might Reasonable Force Be Used?

Staff may use reasonable force in situations where it is necessary to prevent:

- Injury to a pupil, member of staff, or others
- Serious damage to property
- A criminal offence
- Serious disruption to the safe and orderly running of the school
-

This includes situations such as:

- Acting in self-defence
- Breaking up fights
- Preventing a pupil from harming themselves or others
- Responding to behaviour that places others at immediate risk

As highlighted in the school's policy, the decision to intervene physically remains a matter of professional judgement, based on the specific circumstances at the time.

In urgent situations, staff may need to act immediately. In non-urgent situations, staff are expected to prioritise de-escalation strategies and only use force when absolutely necessary.

20. Monitoring and Evaluation of the Safeguarding Policy

Great Ballard School monitors and evaluates its safeguarding policy and procedures through the following activities:

- Weekly welfare team meetings
- Weekly SLT meetings
- Termly tutor meetings
- Termly governors reports to the safeguarding director
- Twice yearly Director Responsible for Safeguarding/Proprietor Group Meetings
- Pupil surveys and questionnaires (including GL Assessment PASS survey, *Pupil Attitudes to School and Study*)
- Regular review of training offered to staff, including online safety training
- Safeguarding Logs and files
- Frequent scrutiny of attendance data
- Regular analysis of a range of risk assessments
- Logs of bullying and/or racist behaviour incidents are reviewed by the senior leadership team and the Board of Directors
- Regular review of parental concerns, complaints and questionnaire feedback
- Regular review of the supervision of pupils in school

21. Other related policies and where to find them

Policies are stored on the staff drive of the school network, and many are available on the school's website.

- Anti-bullying Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Guidance on the use of Force to Control and Restrain Pupils
- Missing Child Policy
- ICT Usage and Internet Policy for Pupils and Staff (separate documents)
- Staff Recruitment Policy
- Rewards and Sanctions Policy
- Behaviour and Discipline Policy
- Complaints Procedures
- Remote Learning Policy
- Low Level Concerns Policy

Appendices

Appendix 1: Roles of the Designated and Deputy Safeguarding Lead

The school's DSL has lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place).

The Designated Safeguarding Lead must have the status and authority within our school management structure to carry out the duties of the post including committing resources and, where appropriate, supporting and directing other staff. It is the responsibility of the Proprietor, to ensure that an appropriate senior staff member is designated. The Deputy DSL is familiar with this role and can step up accordingly.

The role of the DSL comprises of the following key parts:

- Managing referrals
- Working with others
- Information sharing and managing the child protection file
- Raising awareness
- Training, Knowledge and skills
- Providing support to staff
- Understanding the views of children
- Holding and sharing information

Managing referrals

The DSL is responsible for:

- Referring a child to a statutory agency if there are concerns about possible abuse, via the West Sussex Children's Services Integrated Front Door and acting as a focal point for staff to discuss concerns. Referrals should be made, following a telephone call, within 24 hours of a disclosure or suspicion of abuse. Note that referrals to statutory agencies do not require parent consent.
- Managing the referral outcome in accordance with the advice given by the Safeguarding Partners and their own local protocols for assessment. (Note that once a referral has been made, the West Sussex

Safeguarding Children Partnership are required to follow their own timeframes for response. For example, they will make a decision regarding next steps within one working day and see the child within their own timeframes if the referral requires further assessment).

- Engaging and cooperating with our Safeguarding Partners if requested by them (i.e., Great Ballard School may be named as a relevant agency)
- Liaising proactively with Safeguarding Partners and other agencies as may be required. For example:
 - i. The police (cases where a crime may have been committed or in the case of serious harm). “NPCC - When to call the police” should help the DSL understand when they should consider calling the police and what to expect when they do
 - ii. The local authority – West Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership.
 - iii. The local area Clinical Commissioning Group (NHS).
 - iv. Disclosure and Barring Service (in cases where a person is dismissed or has left due to risk/harm to a child)
- Keeping the Head and Board of Directors informed of issues and investigations. This should include being aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult in support at these times.
- Acting as a source of support, advice and expertise to all staff on matters of safety and safeguarding and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies.
- The school’s Online safety provision (though duties may be delegated to pastoral team and Heads of ICT and PSHE).
- Ensuring that either they or a suitably trained representative attends case conferences, core groups, or other multi-agency planning meetings, contributes to assessments and the final report, which is shared with the parents.
- Liaising with the local authority when necessary and working with other agencies in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children and attending strategy meetings.

The DSL/DDSLs at the School understand their role in the new safeguarding partner arrangements (2019). The DSL will work with partner agencies to seek advice, support and guidance, drawing on multi agency expertise, knowledge and experience to support pupils at risk of harm including emotional and intellectual harm via social media and use of the internet. The School maintains a strong relationship with the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) and also the Local Community Support Officers.

Working with others

The designated safeguarding lead is expected to:

- act as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff
- act as a point of contact with the safeguarding partners
- liaise with the headteacher or principal to inform him or her of issues- especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations. This should include being aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult. Further information can be found in the Statutory guidance - PACE Code C 2019 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pace-code-c-2019/pace-code-c-2019-accessible> .
- as required, liaise with the “case manager” (as per Part four) and the local authority designated officer(s) (LADO) for child protection concerns in cases which concern a staff member.
- liaise with staff (especially teachers, pastoral support staff, school nurses, IT technicians, senior mental health leads and special educational needs coordinators (SENCOs), or the named person with oversight for SEND and senior mental health leads) on matters of safety and safeguarding and welfare (including online and digital safety) and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies so that children’s needs are considered holistically
- liaise with the senior mental health lead and, where available, the mental health support team, where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health
- promote supportive engagement with parents and/or carers in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including where families may be facing challenging circumstances

- work with the headteacher and relevant strategic leads, taking lead responsibility for promoting educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children in need are experiencing, or have experienced, and identifying the impact that these issues might be having on children's attendance, engagement and achievement at school or college. 156 This includes:
 - ensuring that the school or college knows who its cohort of children who have or have had a social worker are, understanding their academic progress and attainment, and maintaining a culture of high aspirations for this cohort, and
 - supporting teaching staff to provide additional academic support or reasonable adjustments to help children who have or have had a social worker reach their potential, recognising that even when statutory social care intervention has ended, there is still a lasting impact on children's educational outcomes

Information sharing and managing the child protection file

The designated safeguarding lead is responsible for ensuring that child protection files are kept up to date. Information should be kept confidential and stored securely. It is good practice to keep concerns and referrals in a separate child protection file for each child.

Records should include:

- a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- details of how the concern was followed up and resolved
- a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome. This information will be held securely in our MyConcern/ welfare team files for each individual case.

We ensure the file is only accessed by those who need to see it and where the file or content within is shared, this happens in line with information sharing advice set out in Parts one and two of KCSIE.

Where children leave Great Ballard (including in year transfers) the DSL should ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible, and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term. This will be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit, and confirmation of receipt should be obtained whenever possible as best practice. Receiving schools and colleges should ensure key staff such as designated safeguarding leads and special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCOs), and our welfare team are aware as required.

Raising Awareness

The DSL should:

- Ensure the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection policies are known and used appropriately.
- Oversee online safety with the support of the pastoral team, Head of ICT and the Head of PSHE.
- Ensure the School's safeguarding policy is reviewed (at least) annually and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, including by the Board of Directors.
- Ensure the safeguarding policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school in this.
- Link with the West Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest local policies on safeguarding.
- When children leave the School, ensure their child protection file, if any, is transferred to the new school as soon as possible and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term to allow the new school or college to have support in place for when the child arrives. (Information must be shared in a timely fashion to reduce the risk of missed opportunities to offer support and protection to a child). This should be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure

transit and confirmation of receipt should be obtained. In addition to the child protection file, the DSL should also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school in advance of a child leaving. For example, information that would allow the new school to continue supporting victims of abuse and have that support in place for when the child arrives. Concerns over sharing of information (with regard to the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR) must not stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.

- Provide, with the Head and the Director Responsible for Safeguarding, an annual safeguarding report for the Board of Directors, detailing any changes to the policy and procedures; training undertaken by the DSL, and by all staff and Directors; number and type of incidents/cases, and the number of children with child protection plans (anonymised).
- Provide twice-termly safeguarding updates to staff, on specific safeguarding issues or changes of policy.
- Provide (with the support of the pastoral and welfare teams) regular updates to parents on safeguarding matters in the school newsletter

Training, Knowledge and skills

The DSL and DDSs are fully trained for the demands of this role, both in accordance with KCSIE and as a working set of processes at the School, in child protection and inter-agency working. They regularly attend courses with child support agencies to ensure that they remain conversant with best practice, and they receive appropriate refresher training carried out every two years. This training meets the requirements of the DfE's KCSIE. The DSL should:

- Understand the assessment process for providing early help and statutory intervention, including local criteria for action and local authority children's social care referral arrangements.
- Understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school and college, and with the safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners.
- Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the School's Safeguarding policy and safeguarding procedures, especially new and part time staff. The DSL is responsible for organising and delivering child protection induction, and update training every 3 years, for all school staff.
- Have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so.
- Understand the importance of the role the designated safeguarding lead has in providing information and support to local authority children social care in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Understand the lasting impact that adversity and trauma can have, including on children's behaviour, mental health and wellbeing, and what is needed in responding to this in promoting educational outcomes.
- Be able to make use of the iSams/My Concern software programme to keep detailed, accurate, secure records of concerns and referrals.
 - v. Keeping records of concerns about a child even if there is no need to make an immediate referral.
 - vi. Ensuring that all such records are kept confidentially and securely, separate from pupil records, and are copied on to the child's next school.
 - vii. Ensuring that an indication of any other record-keeping is marked on the pupil records i.e., tutor notes on iSams or counsellor or medical notes.
- Obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses.
- Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, and in any measures the school or college may put in place to protect them.

Providing support to staff

Great Ballard school is committed to ensuring training for the designated safeguarding lead in developing expertise, so they can support and advise staff and help them feel confident on welfare, safeguarding and child protection matters.

This includes specifically to:

- ensure that staff are supported during the referrals processes, and
- support staff to consider how safeguarding, welfare and educational outcomes are linked, including to inform the provision of academic and pastoral support.

Understanding the views of children

It is important that all children feel heard and understood. Therefore, the DSL (and DDSLs) are supported in developing knowledge and skills to:

- encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, and in any measures the school or college may put in place to protect them, and,
- understand the difficulties that children may have in approaching staff about their circumstances and consider how to build trusted relationships which facilitate communication.

Holding and sharing information

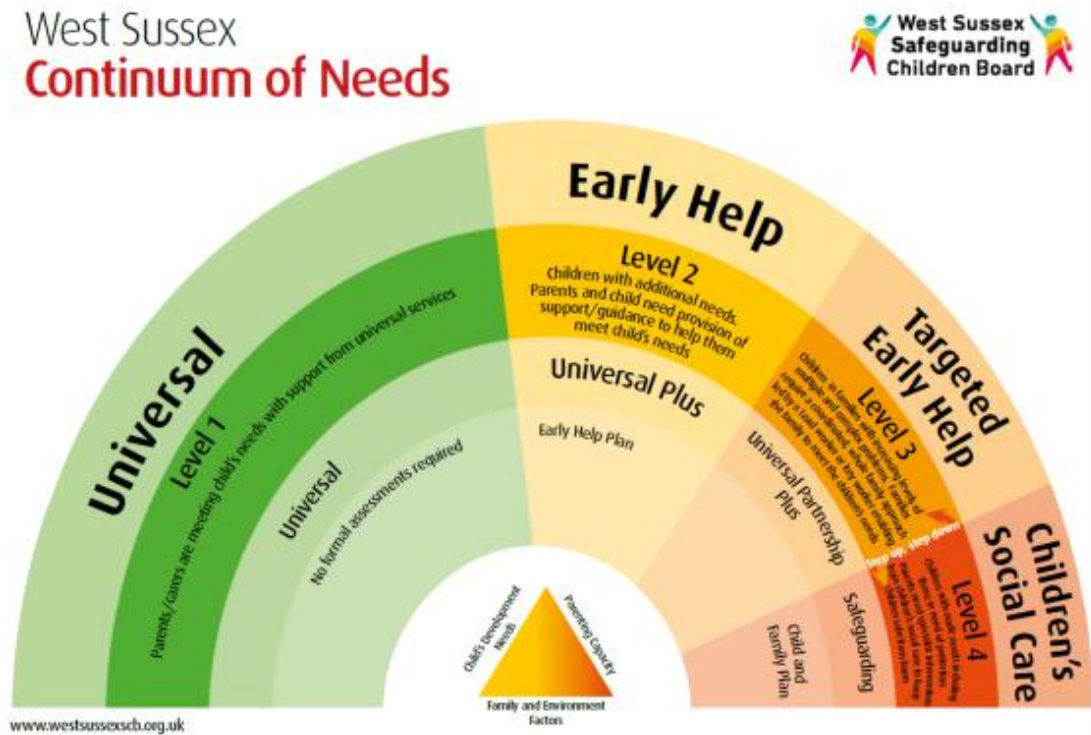
It is critical to ensure the recording, holding, using and sharing information is effective, therefore the DSL will be equipped to:

- understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school, and with other schools and colleges on transfer including in-year and between primary and secondary education, and with the safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners
- understand relevant data protection legislation and regulations, especially the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), and
- be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of all concerns, discussions and decisions made including the rationale for those decisions. This should include instances where referrals were or were not made to another agency such as LA children's social care or the Prevent program etc.

Appendix 2: Safeguarding posters and publications

A number of posters and publications are used around the school to raise the profile of safeguarding in the school. Copies are posted or linked below. In order, please find:

- Continuum of needs (West Sussex)
- Poster for staff
- Poster for children (and parents)



SOMETHING ON YOUR MIND?

You can speak to ANY adult at school about ANYTHING that is worrying you. If you want to speak to an adult on the WELFARE TEAM. They are:



Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead
Mrs. Hardwick



Mental Health Lead
Mrs. Willis



Early years Designated Safeguarding Lead
Mrs Barr



Head of prep school
Mr. Anderson



Designated Safeguarding Lead
Mr. Joseph



SENCo
Mrs. Brooks



Headteacher
Mr. King



Want to talk to someone outside school?

You can call CHILDLINE at any time on
0800 1111

If you would like advice on friendships and
bullying visit:

www.kidscape.org.uk





OUR SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURE



We are all responsible for the welfare of children and keeping the environment safe whatever our job.

We remember "it could happen here" where safeguarding is concerned

All staff must read:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2025) Part 1 and Annex A
- GB Safeguarding Children - Child Protection Policy
- GB Staff Code of Conduct

Staff know the different types of abuse and neglect so that you can identify children who may be in need of help or protection.

DISCLOSURE MADE



ALLEGATION MADE



SUSPICION OF INJURY



CONCERN OR SUSPICION OF INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR



LISTEN DON'T LEAD



Always take the child seriously and act in their best interest. Never promise confidentiality.



All concerns, discussions, decisions and the reasons for them are recorded in as much detail as possible with dates.



SPEAK TO A DSL OR DDSL WITHOUT DELAY ABOUT ANY URGENT CONCERNS



The Safeguarding Team are in regular contact with the Integrated Front Door and other external agencies.

WHISTLEBLOWING



If you're concerned about poor or unsafe safeguarding practises, talk to the DSL, Head or Safeguarding board member.

If you feel unable to talk to anyone in school you can call the NSPCC hotline on: 0800 028 0285 or email help@nspcc.org.uk

RAISING A CONCERN

If unable to reach one of our DSLs, you can contact the Integrated Front Door directly at any time: 01403 229900

Emergency Duty Team (out of office hours): 033 022 26664

Or make an online referral here:

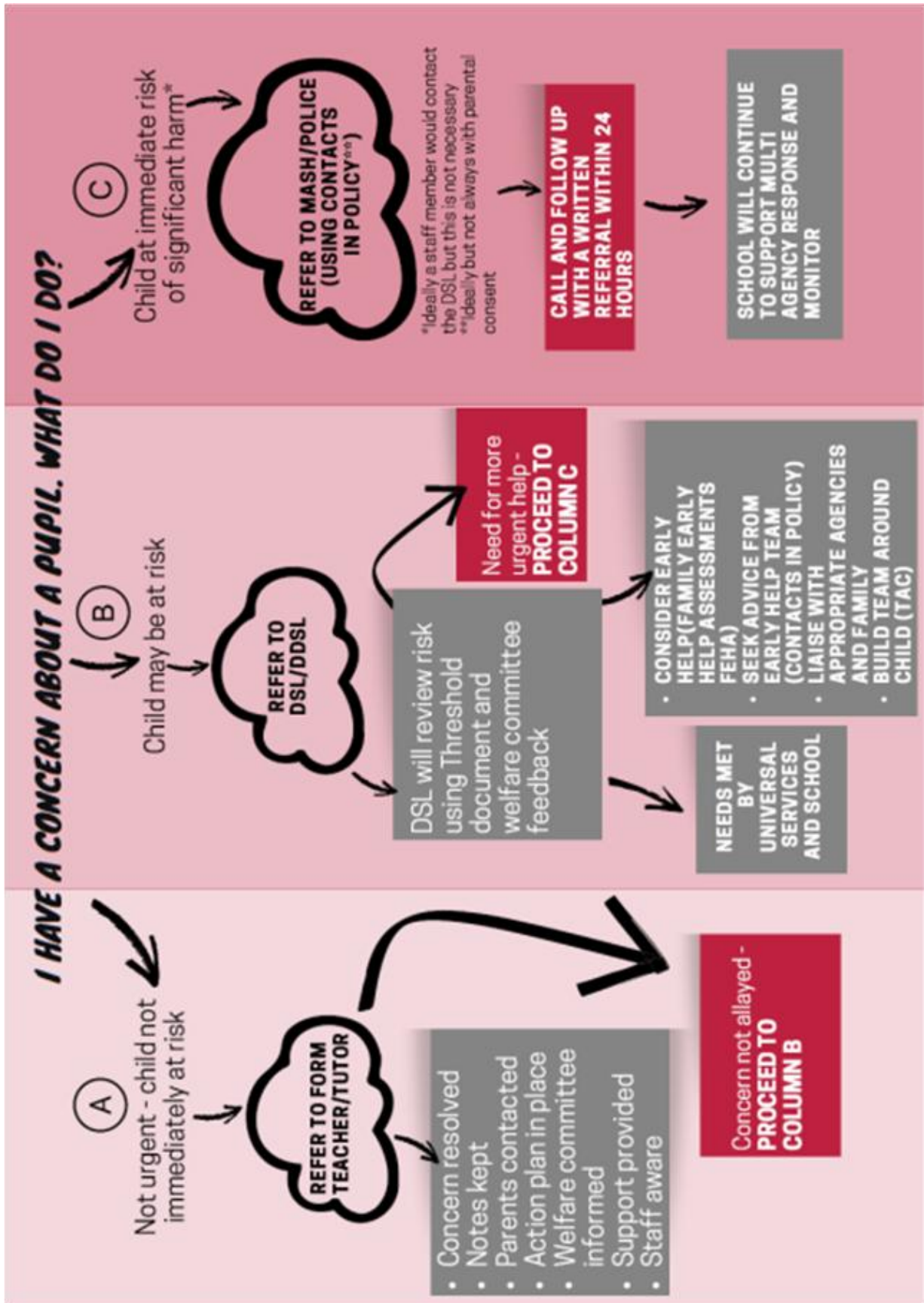
<https://socialcareportal.westsussex.gov.uk/s4s/FormDetails/FillForm?formId=295>

OUR WELFARE TEAM:

DSL – Dan Joseph
DDSL – Alice Hardwick
Head of Prep school – Tom Anderson
SENCO – Sally Brooks
Mental Health Lead – Madeleine Willis
EYFS DSL – Yvonne Barr

Safeguarding Board Member – Vernon Hales

Appendix 3: Quick Referral and Child Protection Flowchart



Appendix 4: Additional Safeguarding Contacts

This list is provided in addition to the list of key contacts at the beginning of this policy

Ofsted	www.ofsted.gov.uk	0300 123 4234	enquiries@ofsted.gov	Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Address for referrals: PO Box 181, Manchester, M1 2WD
Ofsted South Region	Freshford House, Redcliffe Way, Bristol, BS1 6LX	0300 123 4234	enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk	
NSPCC Child Protection Helpline		0808 800 5000		www.nspcc.org.uk
Childline		0800 1111		www.childline.org.uk
Female Genital Mutilation		0800 028 3550	fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk	https://www.westsussexscp.org.uk/professionals/neglect-and-abuse/female-genital-mutilation
The National Referral Mechanism (for possible victims of slavery)			Online form here	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/human-trafficking-victims-referral-and-assessment-forms/guidance-on-the-national-referral-mechanism-for-potential-adult-victims-of-modern-slavery-england-and-wales
Children's Commissioner for England	Anne Longfield	020 7783 8330		www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk
CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection command)			www.ceop.police.uk/ceop-reporting CEOP Education	www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre
The Department for Education				www.gov.uk
The National Crime Agency's CEOP Education team			CEOP Education	Provides information for parents and carers to help protect their child from online child sexual abuse
The UK Safer Internet Centre			http://www.saferinternet.org.uk/	

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The Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse			contact@iicsa.org.uk Online referral: share.iicsa.org.uk	www.iicsa.org.uk
West Sussex Safeguarding Training Contact	Ali Hannant		alison.hannant@westsussex.gov.uk	www.westsussexscp.org.uk/professionals/training
Community Mental Health Liaison Service				https://www.sussexpartnership.nhs.uk/west-sussex-cmhl-service
CATS (Consultation Assessment and Treatment Service relating to Harmful Sexual Behaviour)		01403 223268		https://sussexpartnership.nhs.uk/CATS#:~:text=The%20Consultation%20Assessment%20and%20Treatment,engaged%20in%2C%20harmful%20sexual%20behaviour
E4S: Education for Safeguarding Support for RSHE			alison.hannant@westsussex.gov.uk	https://www.e4swsccalpha.co.uk/what
The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)			https://www.gov.uk/guidance/making-barring-referrals-to-the-dbs	https://www.gov.uk/government/organizations/disclosure-and-barring-service
Lucy Faithful Foundation	shore@lucyfaithfull.org.uk	Stop It Now helpline at 0808 1000 900	https://shorespace.org.uk/	A confidential chat service for young people concerned about their own, or someone else's sexual thoughts and behaviours.

Appendix 5: GB Whole School Safeguarding Training Schedule

Staff category	Training content	Frequency
A: Infrequent contact with children**	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CP in Education or CPE Refresher or face to face training KCSIE Pt1 or Annexe A 	Annually Annually
B: Regular or intensive contact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CP in Education or CPE Refresher or face to face training KCSIE Pt1 and Annexe B Some relevant online training units (<i>e.g., Neglect, Prevent etc.</i>) 	Annually Annually Annually
C: Main role involves children*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CP in Education or CPE Refresher or face to face training KCSIE Pt1 and Annexe B Online training units (<i>e.g., Neglect, Prevent, FGM, CSE, CCE etc.</i>) 	Annually Annually Termly
D: DDSL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CP in Education or CPE Refresher or face to face training KCSIE Online training units (<i>e.g., Neglect, Prevent, FGM, CSE, CCE etc.</i>) DSL training/Refresher Training 	Annually Annually Termly Every 2 years
E: DSL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CP in Education or CPE Refresher or face to face training KCSIE Online training units (<i>e.g., Neglect, Prevent, FGM, CSE, CCE</i>) DSL training/Refresher Training Working Together Training WSSCP Network meetings 	Annually Annually Termly Every 2 years Every 2 years Annually
*Proprietor for safeguarding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CP in Education or CPE Refresher or face to face training KCSIE Online training units (<i>e.g., P on P, Prevent, FGM, CSE, CCE etc.</i>) 	Annually Annually Termly
**Board of directors/advisers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CP in Education or CPE Refresher or face to face training KCSIE (<i>at least Part1 and Annexe B but ideally whole document</i>) 	Annually Annually
All staff	Training content	Frequency
Bulletin updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safeguarding/pastoral/wellbeing update for parents 	Weekly
Staff briefing updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safeguarding/pastoral/wellbeing updates for staff 	Weekly
Staff Meeting/INSET updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fixed slot for pastoral/safeguarding/wellbeing training (<i>e.g., My Concern, changes to KCSIE</i>) 	Half termly
Whole school face to face training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> INSET workshop in person for all staff and GB Board 	Every 3 years
GB Safeguarding Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safeguarding Children/Child Protection (<i>but might also include Behaviour, Code of Conduct, Anti-bullying, Whistleblowing, H&S, Restraint, Missing Child, Online safety, Safer Recruitment, Low Level Concerns</i>) 	On entry and after significant change